

TRANSATLANTIC SKETCHES.



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TRANSATLANTIC SKETCHES,

COMPRISING

VISITS TO THE MOST INTERESTING SCENES IN

NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA,

AND

THE WEST INDIES.

WITH NOTES

ON NEGRO SLAVERY AND CANADIAN EMIGRATION.

BY CAPT. J. E. ALEXANDER,

42D ROYAL HIGHLANDERS.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN submitting these Sketches of Voyages and Travels in the Western Hemisphere to the public, I beg to state the reasons why I undertook them, and also to furnish an outline of the route which I followed, in order that the reader may clearly understand the nature of the work which he may think it worth his while to peruse.

In the beginning of 1831, being unattached to any regiment, and having already visited many parts of the Old World, I determined on an expedition to the New, previous to returning to full pay. I communicated my intention to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, and to other literary and scientific individuals, and volunteered to execute commissions for them in America or the West Indies. I thus obtained a series of interrogatories to answer, and in collecting information for myself, had my attention directed to other matters of great interest, which I might otherwise have omitted to notice

Having provided myself with introductions for the various places I intended to visit, I sailed from the Port of London for South America, and in due time arrived at Stabroek. I spent some time among the planters of the coast of Guiana, and made enquiries into the state of slavery, and the present condition and future prospects of this valuable colony. I also penetrated into the interior, and saw Indian life on the banks of the mighty streams which descend from the Andes, and under the shade of the primeval forest almost untrodden by the foot of the European. I collected in "the Bush" many particulars regarding the wandering tribes in the South American wilderness, and paid some attention to the animate and inanimate productions in general, which are here so different from those of the Eastern hemisphere. I have condensed my information on these subjects as much as possible, and rendered it in, I hope, a popular form. As my sojourn on the great continent daily furnished me with something novel and interesting, I have endeavoured to make my readers participate in the pleasures I enjoyed.

I next steered for Barbadoes, made the tour of that ancient settlement, and have furnished an account of the late dreadful hurricane which swept across it with destruction on its wings.

I then visited in succession Tobago, the scene of the shipwreck and hermitage of the celebrated Robinson Crusoe ; Trinidad, a most valuable

island, but whose capabilities have been as yet very partially developed ; Grenada, that gem of ocean, the most beautiful of the Antilles ; St. Vincent, with scenery of the most sublime and magnificent character, and distinguished by a *souffriere* or volcano ; and Jamaica, with its blue mountains, fertile savannahs, and deadly lagoons.

Whilst voyaging among the British West India Islands, the reader will be furnished with the state of society and manners among the Antilles. Military matters will be discussed, and the condition of the negroes enquired into, about whom the philanthropic in England take such interest ; their condition under British masters will be also noticed and compared with that under other proprietors of negroes, on which subject the writer was sworn to give evidence at the bar of the House of Lords. Having the honour and prosperity of our native land at heart, an endeavour is made to show the value of our Western intertropical possessions ; — possessions, to obtain which the blood of our bravest countrymen has been shed, and their bones lie thickly strewn beside those of the rivals they displaced.

One fact may be here mentioned : so far back as the year 1828, the value of the imports from the British West Indies into Great Britain was £8,908,672. From the East Indies and China the same year, £8,348,767. The exports to the former £4,049,856, to the latter £6,388,330.

From Jamaica I sailed in a frigate for that splendid possession of Spain, Cuba. I there visited the tomb of the great Columbus, and during my residence in Havannah, and in the country, saw many strange sights and heard many strange tales, which are faithfully recorded.

I next sailed in a Spanish vessel for New Orleans, or "the Wet Grave," and arrived there during the sickly season. Whilst I was detained amongst the cane-brakes and cypress swamps of Louisiana, I collected some information regarding the neighbouring territory of Texas, which the reader will find to be the garden of North America.

From New Orleans I sailed up the Mississippi, and, after several adventures, some of a grave, and others of a ludicrous nature, I arrived at Memphis; from thence I journeyed as a sailor, partly on foot and partly in waggons, through the back woods of Tennessee and Kentucky, to Louisville, at the Falls of Ohio.

I next proceeded up the "Queen of Rivers," the Ohio, by Cincinnati to Weeling, in Virginia; then crossed to Lake Erie, whence I went to Buffaloe, and saw the glories of Niagara. I then crossed Lake Ontario to York, Upper Canada; was present at a distribution of presents to Indians; then went to Kingston. I thence proceeded, by the Lake of the Thousand Isles, to the Ottawa, which I ascended to Bytown, on

the Rideau Canal, of which, and of the Welland Canal, a short account is given.

I next descended the Ottawa, by the Rapids of St. Anne, to Montreal, and then embarked on the St. Lawrence, for Quebec. There I obtained information regarding the condition of the Canadian emigrants; and, after visiting various interesting scenes in the neighbourhood of the Canadian capital, arrived at New York, by Lake Champlain, and the noble Hudson.

I then journeyed to Washington, by Philadelphia and Baltimore, to see Congress opened, and had the honour of several interviews with the President of the United States, General Jackson. I returned to New York, and visited the Military Academy at West Point, and the old and agreeable city of Boston; finally, I embarked for Liverpool.

Perhaps, I ought not to confess that these volumes were written, and about sixteen thousand miles were traversed, (in the spirit of the motto of my people,)

“ Per mare, per terram,”

by flood and field, in the space of a twelvemonth. Some will exclaim, “ What solid information can we expect from one who hurries over so extensive a range of travel?” To this I answer, that I had very quick voyages to and from the New World. To South America, three weeks; from North America, sixteen days; and I was equally

fortunate among the West India Islands. I halted a month, a fortnight, or three days, at various places, according to circumstances; and my observation being continually on the alert, I did all in my power to make up for the want of a longer acquaintance with the people and scenes I have attempted to describe. I therefore trust that I shall not be censured for venturing to put forth these tomes.

J. E. A.

Berwick Barracks,

April 1833.

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TRANSATLANTIC SKETCHES.

CHAPTER I.

Embark in a ship bound for South America.—Reflections on leaving England.—Pleasing anticipations.—The General Harris East Indiaman.—Deal boatmen.—Sail down Channel.—A wreck.—Awful catastrophe.—Custom-house regulations.—The solitude of a ship highly beneficial.—A rattling breeze.—Reconnoitred by a suspicious-looking vessel.—The Elysian climate of Madeira.—Nautical superstitions.—A night scene.—The Gulf stream.—The great Columbus and the sea weed.—Tropical showers.—The Coast of Guiana.—Nearly run aground.—A black Pilot.—The Essequibo River.—Appearance of Stabroek.

ON a bright and balmy morning, the face of Nature smiling under the mild influence of a vernal sun (in 1831), I sailed down the Thames to join the good ship *Thomas King*, James Williamson, R.N. Commander, bound for British Guiana, South America.

Having been so long a wanderer, the pang of leaving my father-land was not severe, still a train of melancholy reflections intruded itself on my mind on again embarking on the changeful deep; I was leaving valued friends, many of whom it perhaps might never be my lot to see in life again, and

England ere long might again be engaged in stirring warfare, and there might be scenes of high excitement on the Continent of Europe, whilst I was about to separate myself from them, and to plunge into the wilds of America.

The Old World which I was leaving was rich in the pleasures of memory, the New in the pleasures of hope and of anticipation; in the former had been enacted glorious deeds, and the great men of the earth had there earned an imperishable fame. The treasures of ages were there accumulated, and the imposing monuments of antiquity, the majestic cathedral, and the baronial castle, all bore the impress of matured civilization, and of "the shadowy grandeur of the past." In America I was about to see Nature in her pristine vigour, the virgin soil bursting with fertility and abundance; the mountains, lakes, and rivers, on a scale of magnificence far surpassing that of Europe; and her endless forests, many of them nearly impenetrable and trackless from the wild luxuriance and rankness of the vegetation. There was risk and uncertainty before me, but mingled with many pleasing anticipations.

The ship lay a day at Gravesend, and a solitary stroll in Kent was particularly interesting to one leaving his country, even for a short season. The trees and hedge-rows were just beginning to assume their verdant liveries; the spring birds were coyly wooing their mates, and the villagers were busily employed in their gardens; all around "Hope told

a flattering tale," and gave promise of abundance and plenty in the forthcoming autumn.

An Indiaman of the first class passed up the river between two steam vessels, and I recognised in her the old General Harris, which ten years before had borne thirty-six beardless youths besides myself to "the land of the sun." Over the bones of many of these, who with me left England full of life and high in hope, the sands of the Carnatic are now drifting, or the rank grass of the Deccan waving over their early graves.

Whilst we lay at Deal, many boatmen came off to supply us with sea stores. They seemed anxious for another war; for since the last, their circumstances had been daily declining. No "free trade" now; little smuggling, and no carrying of specie to the opposite coast. Fortunes they had made, but these they had squandered by imprudently investing their funds in ships and foreign stock; and penury was now the lot of hundreds of these hardy seamen.

On leaving the Downs, myself the only passenger besides a Master Lewis, we had heavy rain: this is considered a good omen by mariners, and so it proved, for a favouring gale filled our canvass, and we quickly passed the white cliffs on the coast of Kent—how often gazed on with eyes moist with the salt tear of both joy and sorrow!

We had got about half way down Channel, when a wine cask floated past us, followed by a dozen others, besides spars and pieces of wreck. Finally a

large vessel, keel upwards, appeared on the swell of the merciless deep, apparently a French ship, recently wrecked. It was a most melancholy sight; the black hull of the noble vessel, with the white crested waves dashing over it, at one time was buried in foam, then it rose above the billows, and showed its dark length. Most probably the crew had met with a watery grave, for she seemed to have been run down. To what painful reflections did not this give rise; the thick channel fog causing the steersman to look round in perplexity, in dread, and in continual apprehension of disaster. Suddenly a black cross appears towering above him—it is the foretop-gallant-mast of a large ship; the lower stratum of the dense vapour is rolled aside by the broad bows, and rising fearfully on a mountain wave, she crashes over the frail and sinking wreck, and hurries on her course with the blast which bears after her the shrieks of the drowning crew.

“ Then all is hushed,
Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
Of billows.”

The Custom-house regulations requiring wine and spirits picked up at sea to be surrendered, our captain did not wait to secure any of the casks floating so temptingly round us, but philosophically bore away from them, and ere long we bade adieu to the last vestige of England, the Lizard light.

Few contrasts are so great as that of one day moving in the midst of a bustling crowd, madly pursuing pleasure and gain, and the next finding

oneself alone, and without companions on the ocean ; few situations are so beneficial to the mind and heart, and few so well calculated to fit man for fulfilling his various duties in life, as quitting for a while the tumultuous scenes of a metropolis, with its noisy enjoyments on one hand, and squalid misery and heart-rending distress on the other, and seeking for a while repose in the “ solitude of retirement.”

On the silent mountain’s side, in the depths of forests, or whilst navigating the great waters, the mind may regenerate itself, and, freed from the artificial atmosphere in which it may have existed, it has then opportunity for reflection on by-gone scenes, on successful projects, or on hopes blighted ; has then a chance of gathering wisdom from experience, can then look inwardly with a rigid self-examination, and firmly resolve on future well-doing.

So far from feeling melancholy or *ennui* during the voyage to South America, it was the source of the greatest satisfaction to me, and let no man delay or abandon an expedition for want of a companion ; if pleasure only is sought, companions are indispensable, but on a journey to acquire information, they are quite unnecessary. With books, and as many resources as possible within himself, the solitary voyager may hold on his way with a cheerful spirit, and taste the joys of an Eden easily created in his own breast.

We stood away towards Madeira with a nine-

knot breeze, and a very heavy sea running; and though we shipped a good deal of water over the bows, yet the captain was determined to make a quick passage, "cracked on" all the canvass our tight little bark could bear, and more, for she was borne down on her beam ends, and seemed frequently on the verge of upsetting; with all this we made about seven hundred miles in three days, and rushed onwards through seas crested with white and sparkling foam.

Along the coasts of Spain and Portugal we saw some ships, most of them appearing like specks in the distant horizon, but after we passed the latitude of Gibraltar, we had the wide expanse of the Atlantic to ourselves. Two little birds of the Finch genus remained on board as long as the blowing weather continued, but left us when we got into summer seas; and with the exception of a shoal or two of porpoises, no living thing came near us during the voyage.

One of the above vessels caused some speculation; the reason was this—seeing us steering towards her, she clewed up her mainsail, and backed her mizen-topsail, and lay across our bows at the distance of a mile and a half; she was a rakish-looking man of war or pirate, corvette size, and as she rose on the swell, she showed a straight sheer and broad tier of ports; we had only two carronades on board, and should have fallen an easy prize to her, and she certainly had a most suspicious look. She closely reconnoitred us as we approached, and

up went a tri-coloured flag at her peak over a white and red ensign in four horizontal stripes ; she backed and filled for a time, seemingly undecided how to act, but at last set her mainsail, and stood away to the north-east.

What an Elysian climate is experienced in the latitude of that last resort and faint hope of the worn-out invalid—Madeira! How bright the sky, and how gentle and soothing blows the trade wind near that favoured shore! “*Fortunata Insula!*” but how painful it is to reflect on the many hundred fair forms and brave spirits who have been compelled to seek its climate to avert for a time the stroke of the fell tyrant—Death! How few with renovated constitutions have been permitted to revisit their father-land! Our captain had frequently taken out passengers to Madeira; young women, adorned with every personal grace and highly cultivated minds, but on whose cheek was painted the fatal hectic flush; and young men, ornaments to their different professions, but afflicted with a sepulchral cough, which told too plainly that their days were numbered, and that they were shortly to repose in the shade of the myrtles of the Funchal cemetery.

“ The genius of the isle that showers
His germs of fruits, his fairest flowers,
Hath cast his robes of vernal bloom
In guardian fondness o’er their tomb.”

In the evening, when the ship was under easy sail, a few of the hands would sit in a group

in the waist, and as usual tell their favourite ghost stories. It is wonderful what superstition there is among seamen, and how easily they are frightened with any thing that savours of the supernatural; sometimes they are so excited by tales of terror that they are afraid to look round, to leave the group, or to go to their berths. I made a small collection of naval anecdotes of the above stamp, one may serve as a specimen of the whole.

A ship was sailing in the North Sea, and black clouds hurrying across the welkin, and collecting in heavy masses, indicated to the careful commander that a storm was brewing aloft; the haulyards were let go preparatory to reefing the topsails, but the main-topsail-yard would not come down on the cap, and two hands were sent up to "overhaul the tie;" they had just got into the main-top, when a coffin tumbled out of it, and fell on the quarter-deck. The captain immediately went to his cabin, loaded his pistols, called the hands aft, and ordered them to touch the coffin in succession; the two men who had gone aloft were the last to do so, but when they approached the bier, blood flowed from it, they confessed a murder, the coffin disappeared in a flash of fire, and the criminals were placed in irons, landed, and in due course hanged.

Poets sigh for "a lodge in some vast wilderness," and truly they might have found it in our quiet ship, as she pursued her lonely way over the Atlantic. Of an evening, after sitting for hours holding sweet converse with a favourite author under

the cabin lamp swinging overhead, and every sound hushed in the vessel, except the monotonous creaking of the timbers joining in chorus with the rush of the billows as we bounded over the deep, I would change the scene and stroll on deck : solitude was also there ; the watch (by permission) was asleep under the booms, the helmsman plied his silent task, the clouds rolling on the easy gale across the face of the “ gentle moon,” occasionally obscured her disk, and then permitted her to send a broad beam of light over the ocean, and to illuminate our canvass, and cause us to move “ in glory and in joy” over the dark waters.

The easterly wind bore us within the influence of the gulf stream, where branches of sea weed continually floated past us, some fresh and green, others yellow and withered, as if they had long been torn from their bed, about the situation of which the scientific are so divided in opinion ; but as these “ Sketches ” are intended for the general reader, we will not here pause to speculate on “ the fields of ocean ” from whence these beautiful marine plants are derived, and only recall to mind their effect on the crew of the prince of navigators, the immortal Christopher Colon. Disheartened with the length of their voyage, the trade winds blowing continually from a quarter which seemed to debar the hope of their return, the ravenous shark rising “ like a spectre ” from the depths of the Atlantic, and flying fish seen for the first time, besides other causes of alarm, induced them to demand from their

intrepid commander an abandonment of his unrivalled enterprise; but his gallant spirit bore him through his desperate trials, and pointing to the seaweed, he revived the drooping spirits of his crew by the prospect of a speedy sight of the land of promise.

After some heavy squalls of wind, accompanied with a deluge of rain, we found ourselves transferred from a blue and transparent sea, into water of a turbid brown colour; and though we did not see land, yet we sounded and found bottom with only three fathoms of line: we then knew that we were close to the South American coast, and to the mouth of one of the mighty streams of the New World. A small schooner appeared steering across our bows, at the distance of two or three miles; a boat with six stout hands was sent to inquire our exact position, and we anchored to await the return of the mission. The horizon in the mean time clearing, we perceived the tops of trees resting, as it were, on the surface of the water to leeward: the anchor was then got up, and we stood along shore, the current setting strong to the north-east; we thought to make the Demerara River, but we passed it, and got by mistake into the Great Essequibo (there twenty-five miles in breadth with numerous islands), and before our boat rejoined us, we tacked in a quarter less three fathoms on the hard and dangerous sand of Quakeraba, where, if we had struck, we must have

gone to pieces : fortunately we deepened our water, and again anchored.

The Essequibo communicates with the Great Amazons and Orinoco rivers by means of the Rio Negro ; and it was interesting to reflect that the grey water on which we floated was perhaps tinged with the *debris* of the Andes, which, having been transported from the interior for two or three thousand miles, was now mingling with the briny flood.

After dusk a black pilot, with a bunch of plantains in his hand, boarded us from a small cutter ; he requested a glass of porter, asked me if “ Massa got any old trowsers ? ” and then took charge of the vessel.

The current was still setting strong from the mouth of the Great Amazons towards the Orinoco ; heavy clouds charged with rain hung over the land, and we were drenched with tropical showers, which fell not in drops, but as if a sluice or the windows of heaven had been suddenly opened. We stood towards the mouth of the Demerara, which appeared, as opening among the trees, of two miles in breadth : the sable Palinurus carried us over the bar (with only nine feet of water on it at ebb-tide), and we found ourselves in a broad river.

On both banks the coridore and mangrove trees grew thick ; here and there amongst them the palms waved their fringe-like leaves, their tall stems ap-

pearing like living columns over the lower vegetation. No hill or rising ground was visible in any direction, for this part of South America is a dead flat, consisting of a rich alluvial soil, carried down from the branches of the giant Andes. Stabroek, or George Town, was situated on the left, but few of the houses could be seen, the foliage being so dense; a lighthouse (of which there are far too few in our western possessions) became the most conspicuous object in the picture. About sixty vessels lay opposite the town, all under the British flag; schooners conveying the produce from the different estates along the coast, were leaving and entering the noble stream; the negro crews of these droghers shouted, laughed, and asked us the news as they passed under our stern; occasionally they sung in wild chorus, or like Tritons blew a long blast from a large conch shell.

Whilst inhaling the fresh and fragrant odour of the land breeze, on viewing the serenity of the sky, the gorgeous foliage shading comfortable white houses of two stories, surrounded with verandahs, the river bearing on its bosom a fleet of merchantmen, the windmills and tall chimneys of numerous steam-engines on the bank opposite to Stabroek, and all betokening the wealth and importance of British Guiana, or the united colonies of Demerara, Essequibo, and Berbice, I was led to exclaim, "Are these the splendid possessions which some in England are willing to sacrifice to an unjust

and ignorant clamour, whereby the thousands depending on them for subsistence would be plunged into ruin? and above all, when the superabundant population at home, renders it so difficult to provide employment for the rising generation?" But a truce to this subject; my reader must be rather sea-sick, and so, if he pleases, we will land, and commence another chapter.

CHAPTER II.

Land at Stabroek.—The streets.—The white inhabitants.—The coloured.—The negroes.—The coloured and black freemen.—The Indians or Bucks.—The military.—The barracks.—Medical men.—Causes of mortality among the troops.—Injudicious manner in which the English and Dutch live in Stabroek.—Animal food condemned.—The public buildings and private residences.—Stabroek a city of refuge.—Anecdote.—Form of Government.—Civil and criminal courts.—Grants of land.—Anti-Malthusian doctrine.—Salubrity of the climate.—A castle of indolence.—Tricks played with electric eels.—The last census.—Slave population on the increase.—Returns of produce.—Imports.—Price of labour and provisions.—Examination of soil.—Defence of British Guiana from foreign invasion.

THE stelling, or wooden landing-place, was occupied by a few negresses sitting beside trays of fruit and vegetables ; from thence a road, flanked by canals, led to the streets, which were unpaved, but in excellent order. Except close to the river, the houses of the inhabitants were widely scattered, each being surrounded by a garden and lofty trees. Last year it was found impossible to keep the gardens free from weeds, owing to the amazing quantity of rain that had fallen, which was reckoned by feet, and not by inches in the usual way : thus in five months six feet eight inches of rain fell at Stabroek !

The European inhabitants were riding or walking about in white Panama hats, and clothes suited to a tropical climate : though nearly under the line, the men had a tolerably healthy look, because they moved about in the open air ; but the white ladies were exceedingly pale and sickly in their appearance ; a few were observed riding in gigs, for they never condescend to walk abroad, the consequence of which is that they are generally very languid and debilitated. The mulatto men, in straw hats and round jackets, were tall and robust, and the brown ladies also well grown and in excellent case ; they wore handkerchiefs tied round the head, after the fashion of the French *femmes de chambre* ; but above all the negroes attracted attention.

One would have imagined, from the incessant outcry in England about ameliorating the condition of the black population in the colonies, that the negroes are in a very deplorable condition—emaciated, borne down with hard labour, wearing a look of hopeless despondency, badly fed, badly clothed, and sounds of suffering and of the whip of the driver everywhere heard : no such thing. The men were well clothed and well fed ; hats or striped caps they wore on their heads ; and though they prefer carrying their jacket under their arm to wearing it on their shoulders, and strip to their work to the trowsers, yet they all seemed to be abundantly supplied with clothes. The negresses were decently clad in printed gowns, and were commonly seen walking about huckstering vegeta-

bles, carried in a wooden tray on their heads. There were no sounds but those of merriment ; the song and chorus of a group of young negresses, the salutations and jokes of friends meeting, and the incessant gabbling of the old women, who when they can get no one to converse with, carry on a conversation (aloud) with their own sweet selves, like negroes at their balls, sometimes dancing to their own shadow on the wall for want of a partner.

Contrasted with the sleek appearance of the slaves, there were certain ragged and miserable-looking beings sitting at the corners of the streets, or sleeping off their drunkenness in the shade. These were free negroes, and disreputable people of colour ; those who were awake, were gambling and quarrelling ; blasphemy and horrid oaths were on their lips, and their presence was offensive. As a proof of the incorrigible laziness and worthlessness of these " low caste " freemen of Stabroek, they cannot be induced to push a canoe into the river and fish. The market is badly supplied with fish, which are scarce and dear in town, though they abound in the stream.

Last of all, the Indians, or Bucks, from the interior are to be noticed, and it is with great interest that a stranger contemplates these children of nature moving among civilized life. Of short stature, but well proportioned, they walk about in a state of nudity, with the exception of a narrow lap or strip of blue Salampore about their loins, their head protected from the sun and shower by their

straight and glossy black hair alone, their skins beautifully clean, and of a light mahogany colour; their features were those of handsome Tartars, oval, the nose long but not prominent, the eyes wide apart and narrow; their expression was pathetic, but good-natured and amiable. Their wives followed them in blue petticoats, and with the breasts exposed, rows of party-coloured glass beads about their necks, their raven tresses neatly braided, and fastened with a silver skewer on the crown of the head. Men and women carried either a child across the hip, or bows and arrows, pegals or baskets, parrots, or skins of birds to barter for powder, shot, and cloth.

I have thus given a sketch of the people I met in walking through Stabroek to a lodging-house, and before I repose in the New World I shall say a word on the military. An old acquaintance, Lieutenant-Colonel Chalmers of the 25th, on my arrival invited me to join the mess of his regiment. I availed myself of the hospitable invitation, but was sorry to remark that several of the officers and many of the men of the regiment were suffering from fever and ague; one hundred were sick out of three hundred. The barracks were in a low, swampy, and badly-drained situation; in fact, there was a puddle of water covered with weeds in the middle of the barrack square. The burial-ground was immediately opposite: altogether the site of the barracks is very bad, but it could be improved without removing them.

The soil and climate of Guiana are totally different from the West India islands, though people at home are so ignorant of this, that the colony of Demerara is commonly considered to be an island, Essequibo to be in Mexico, and in the Edinburgh Almanack for 1831 Berbice is placed among the Bahama islands ! No wonder, then, that the surgeons who accompany regiments from England are unacquainted with the diseases and their mode of treatment in Guiana; but when they arrive, they undoubtedly should condescend to be instructed by the old and experienced surgeons of the colony.

During the war a frightful source of disease among the military was the crowded state of the barracks; though building materials are cheap and most abundant (wood I mean), and though a water and sun proof shed, with a dry floor, is all that is required for soldiers in the West, yet they were crowded into small rooms, their hammocks were touching one another, and six men used to occupy the same space that three now do in those admirable contrivances the iron bedsteads.

Formerly when a regiment of seven hundred strong arrived in the country, they were all cramped up together, and made to occupy as little space as possible. Three hundred would quickly die off with impure air and new rum; the four hundred who would survive would be healthy, because, it was said, they had got inured to the climate, but in reality because they had got room to breathe; and the troops in the islands are now compara-

tively healthy for the same reason. Yet there are many points which still require alteration and amendment, and if medical men would only make representations in the proper quarter, doubtless abuses would be immediately enquired into and removed; but, alas! what is "every body's business is nobody's."

I shall not now trespass further on the patience of the general reader with observations on the treatment of soldiers in the western colonies, but reserve for another place some more observations on this important point. Health is a subject in which we are all interested, and he must be unfeeling indeed, who does not sympathise with brave men suffering under an injudicious system, which cannot be known at head-quarters unless subordinate officers will most respectfully submit proposed improvements to the higher authorities.

Whilst on the subject of health I may remark, that during the few days I remained at Stabroek I was particularly struck with the manner in which the English and Dutch families live; it seemed to me to be highly injudicious even in a cold climate. Before breakfast a Dutchman has his pipe and several drams of schidam, and some of the old English residents adopt the same system; at breakfast is the favourite pepper-pot, or meat stewed with cassireep, (the juice of the bitter cassava or manioc,) and made pungent with red and green pepper; there is also salt fish from the United States or Newfoundland, beef-steaks, and unripe

plaintains roasted ; abundance of butter and grease of every kind is employed in the *cuisine*, and green tea is in high favour. After this substantial meal, between ten and twelve o'clock there is a little sauntering exercise, according to the calls of business ; in the middle of the day there is a meat lunch, after which the siesta in the grass hammock. At dinner there are again loads of meat, and a mixture of porter, spirits, wine, &c. and supper at ten o'clock : all this would produce inflammatory diseases in any climate, and particularly within 6° of the line. I need hardly say, that if a person wishes to enjoy good health, he must place a restraint upon his appetite in all situations, and live by rule ; and I may state, after an experience of all climates, that two small slices of meat per day are quite sufficient to support nature, with milk, bread, and vegetables as may be requisite, and even whilst taking very violent exercise ; thus two hundred miles have been ridden in one day, and fifty walked in another, without any animal food for some time previous. When young men visit the tropics, their friends say, " Don't drink," (every one knows that strong drink is injurious,) but they are seldom warned against strong meat ; it is that which is so pernicious ; but consume it in moderation,

" Then good digestion waits on appetite,
And health on both."

The public buildings in Stabroek are the residence of the Governor, Sir Benjamin d'Urban, G.C.B. called the Camp, which is commodious,

rendered cool by broad galleries round it, and shaded with many noble trees. There are also several excellent churches; an extensive range of public offices of brick, now just finished; a jail, with that useful appendage a treadmill; hospitals, &c.; and there is a steam-boat for the ferry across the river, which vessel is also employed to convey purchasers to estates that may be exposed to sale.

I was much pleased with the neat manner in which the private houses of respectability were fitted up; the broad piazzas rendered them extremely cool, and the open windows and doors gave free passage to the fragrant breeze; goglets of porous earthenware in the verandah, cooled the rain water collected in tanks and cisterns from the roof; convolvuli twined round the pillars and trellis-work of the gallery, and the rich odour of the mignonette was diffused through the rooms. The broad-leaved plantain and papaw, the acacia with golden flowers, the fig tree and myrtle, grew beside the majestic palmetto royal in the garden; couches, tables and chairs, were of the beautiful colonial woods; the walls of the rooms were handsomely papered, and on them were wall-shades in silver sockets, to skreen the light from the wind and winged insects; and the floors were covered with oil-cloths. The East Indian punkah was wanting, but the sea-breeze from the north-east during the day, and the land breeze from the south-east during the night, obviated the necessity for the "punkah's cooling breath;" and it has been truly said of the good people of Stabroek,

whose hospitality is gratefully remembered by one who ardently desires their prosperity, "that their doors are ever open to the stranger, and their purses never shut to the needy."

Stabroek is a city of refuge for bad characters from the West India islands—they abound here, and it seems difficult to prevent their ingress. The manner in which they live is this:—every estate has a schooner, manned by a black captain and six negroes; in these vessels, as I said before, the produce (rum and sugar) is conveyed to Georgetown for shipment to England. The estates are principally on the coast, and not up the rivers, since the conquest of British Guiana from the Dutch in 1796. In every schooner there is an experienced cooper, who dexterously opens the casks, takes out a part of their contents, and, like a cunning workman, makes all smooth again. At night the black captain sends a canoe under the wooden wharfs with the plunder; a trap-door communicates with the obscure dwellings of the white vagabonds before-mentioned; they purchase from the negro captain at a cheap rate, and again sell their commodities to hucksters and grog-shops in town. In 1823 five hundred whites were ferreted out to serve in the militia against the negroes in a state of insurrection; of these Europeans the police had previously no knowledge, for they slept all day and drank and gambled all night; they shunned the light "because their deeds were evil."

The Dutch form of government is still preserved

in British Guiana, and the laws are administered by a governor and council. The members of council are elected by the keizers, or representatives of the people, and each burgher possessing twenty-five slaves, or six hundred guilders per annum, is entitled to a vote.

The council framing laws is termed the court of policy, and the court of justice was composed, when I was in Stabroek, of the governor and certain councillors. Great civil and criminal causes came under the cognizance of this court, while petty offences were referred to the commissary court. The fiscal, or public prosecutor or attorney-general, was the principal officer of this court; his duty was also to inspect the roads of the colony, accompanied by the burgher captains of the districts. Lately the courts of civil and criminal justice have been annihilated, and others created in their place; peripatetic judges holding sessions in British Guiana, Trinidad, and St. Lucie twice a year; also petty courts are to be established. The crown colonists complain of this new arrangement, because it will produce great delay, debtors will be favoured, property in the market will deteriorate in value, and so on.

Grants of land are obtained by application to the governor and council; the usual size of an estate is a quarter of a mile of front, and a mile and a half in depth; if not cleared in part within a certain time the grant is annulled. Strange to say, it was Englishmen who first showed the Dutch the

superiority of the land of the coast to that on the banks of the rivers. From the Pomeroon river to the Berbice, there is a stripe of cultivation with the richest soil in the world, and bounded by a forest which extends across the continent, passes the Andes and ends only with the Pacific.

I did not visit Berbice, which was first settled, but the appearance of the country there, and the manner of cultivating sugar and coffee, are similar to Demerara and Essequibo. Many cotton estates have been abandoned in Berbice, such a mania prevails for sugar making, though it is well known that the colonies produce far more than there is a demand for in England. A sugar estate requires a negro per acre; a coffee estate two for three acres, and a cotton estate one for two acres: it will thus be seen the great expense that attends a sugar estate.

I often wishēd that some of those who think that ere long the world will be overpeopled, and that we shall shoulder one another off it, or into the sea, could view the vast solitudes of Guiana, and reflect that nearly the whole of the interior of the South American continent, though capable of supporting billions of inhabitants, is as yet almost entirely in the keeping of nature. The cultivation in British Guiana is now confined to two hundred miles of the coast, and the same may be said of South America generally.

In the West, the general impression is, that the climate of Guiana is unhealthy, but it is really less

so than that of the neighbouring islands. When the forest was first cleared on the coast, and the decayed trees and leaves exposed to the influence of the sun, when the sea unconfined by dikes was allowed to form salt marshes, then yellow fever prevailed, but for several years this fatal malady has been altogether unknown here.

The "Dandy," or stiffening fever, three years ago paid a flying visit to the islands and the main; it seems to have been a sort of rheumatic attack, the joints became suddenly stiff, and the patient was assisted to his hammock, where for two or three days he remained in a helpless state, and in considerable pain, but gradually recovering, no bad effects resulted.

I walked about Stabroek, and visited the friends to whom I had introductions, the public buildings, and that castle of indolence, the Logie, or shed on the banks of the river, for the accommodation of the Bucks, or Indians who visit the town. There the men and children lay in their hammocks, suited in size for an adult or for a child a day old; the buckeens, or women, were commonly baking the flour of Cassava on an iron plate, and they ate as they felt inclined, for the Indians have no fixed hours for meals, and of course have not the slightest idea of the value of time.

In Stabroek, it is usual for the old residents to amuse themselves at the expense of strangers; wonderful stories are told of snakes, as large as trees, of alligators cooling themselves on the streets of an

evening, and occasionally looking in at a bed-room window, of vampires attacking the throat, and of land crabs, so large that two or three of them will drag a man into their holes if he happens to sleep near them. I heard many strange tales which I need not repeat, but will mention a trick which was played me, and with which new comers are often served.

I was standing in the gallery of a house belonging to a half-pay officer (now a planter), when I observed a large jar in the garden; I enquired what it contained, and was told, an electric eel, "but," said my friend, "I have had it a long time, it is sickly, and has entirely lost its electrifying powers." I went to examine it, and saw a brown flat-headed broad-tailed eel, four or five feet long, with a look of "*noli me tangere*," moving slowly round the inside of the jar. The planter then taking up a piece of old iron hoop, said in an off-handed manner, "If you touch him with this, you will perceive he has lost all his power." I did so, and was nearly knocked flat on my back: the shock was most severe, though the eel did not appear to be the least agitated; of course my friend was highly delighted.

Scenes of great diversion are occasioned among the English sailors who come to Stabroek by electric eels, they are told to bring them to be cooked. Jack bares his arm and plunges his hand into the jar, and in a moment receives a shock which benumbs him; he looks round in wild amazement,

and then at the eel, all the while rubbing his elbow. "Try again, Jack, for a bottle of rum:" he does so, grasps the eel firmly, grins and swears at "the beggar," receives shock after shock, drops the eel in despair, and runs off as if the devil had struck him. A little dog was thrown into a jar one day in which there was an electric eel, and was so paralyzed that it sunk helpless to the bottom, and was got out alive with some difficulty; and a horse that attempted to drink out of the jar was immediately thrown back on its haunches, and galloped off with mane and tail on end snorting with terror.

The last census of Demerara and Essequibo I have seen is of 1829, there were then,

White males	.	.	.	2,100
Ditto females	.	.	.	906 = 3006
<hr/>				
Coloured and black freemen	.		.	2,530
Ditto ditto females	.		.	3,830 = 6,360
<hr/>				
Slaves, males	.	.	.	37,092
Ditto females	.	.	.	32,276 = 69,368
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Total				— 78,734
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At present more than seven twentieths of the slave population are under twenty years of age, and a large proportion of the females are already arrived at the age of bearing children; the average age of all the slaves is about thirty-two years and a half, and I now select at random a few plantations as exhibiting an increase during the last three years, fully equal to the periodical increase of the

population of Great Britain, which has been estimated at one and a half per cent. per annum.

	Negroes.	Births.	Deaths.	Increase per ct.	Average age.
Enmore . . .	301	34	9	9 nearly	28½
Hamburg . . .	260	19	7	5	42
Batchelor's adventure	690	62	36	4	31
Chateau Margeau . .	241	23	9	6	30
Foulis . . .	156	20	7	9	27
Jalousie . . .	309	25	10	5½	35

The different parishes differ in salubrity, and the greater mortality in some is to be imputed to their situation on the banks of rivers and creeks, which have always been considered unhealthy. This conclusion is borne out by the smaller degree of mortality in the parishes on the sea coast, where the air is very salubrious. The mortality of the colony on the average of the last three years is one in twelve. Further, with regard to the slave population, a check has been given to the natural but serious loss hitherto suffered by the dropping off of the old Africans, and the approaching equalization of the sexes; and it must be highly gratifying to the humane to know that the colony has reached the termination of a period of decrease, and will now doubtless exhibit an increasing population.

The amount of the produce of Demerara and Essequibo in 1829 was—

Sugar	91,652,331 lbs.
Coffee	4,555,789 „
Rum	3,389,739 gallons.
Molasses	2,288,737 „
Cotton	1,217,269 lbs.
Plantains	526,424 guilders.
Cattle	64,844 „

4s. 6d. sterling is equal to 1 Spanish dollar,=3 guilders,=60 stivers. The measures are English, from a gill to a gallon, and 110 lbs. English are equal to 100 lbs. Dutch. The expenditure of 1830 was guilders 985,899. The average value of the imports for the last three years—

From Great Britain, value of imports . £554,869

Ships . 177

Tonnage . 51,704

From British North American Colonies . £139,180

Ships . 302

Tonnage . 29,645

The price of labour is very high in Stabroek; a dollar a day is usually given to a common artizan, but certain Europeans purchase negroes and let them out as task-gangs, and realize a handsome profit in this way. I saw many of these task-gangs building houses, digging trenches, making dikes, &c.

Medical men usually receive as follows, eleven guilders for a visit during the day, and twenty-two during the night; and lawyers also twenty-two for an hour's consultation.

All proprietors of slaves pay six guilders of a capitation tax per annum.

The price of provisions varies very much; for instance, American flour, which usually sells for eight dollars a barrel, rose to four-and-twenty when I was in Stabroek. The trade with the United States had just been thrown open, but the Americans imagined that they could not compete with the Canadians, and they again thought that the market would be overstocked by the Americans; the consequence was, that neither Ame-

ricans nor Canadians sent any flour, and the price rose to a ruinous amount, but this was temporary. Butcher's meat usually sells for ten stivers the pound, a pair of fowls forty stivers, and a large querriman fish from six to nine guilders.

Though the soil of Stabroek is argillaceous, yet no one makes bricks for the foundations of the wooden houses, or tiles instead of the Wallaba shingles for the roofs; the bricks are sent from England at an enormous expense. Some brick sugar-works near town have cost £20,000. I examined the only shaft that ever was sunk in Stabroek for water, the strata were as follows—

To the depth of 44 feet — blue clay.

10 do. — fragments of wood partly decayed.

19 do. — compact whitish grey clay.

31 do. — yellow sand mixed with clay.

6 do. — violet coloured clay when first brought to the surface, afterwards it became light grey.

10 do. — white sand and clay mixed.

2 do. — quartorze sand and clay mixed;
water.

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The principal defence of Guiana from a foreign foe consists in the shallowness of the sea on the coast; large men of war are unable to approach it, and the rivers are guarded by dangerous bars. Signals can be made from the Berbice river to the Pomeroon with great rapidity, and what with regular troops, the colonial militia, sailors from the ships, and the Indians, a formidable force might be

speedily assembled to repel invasion. Still, however, the fort at Stabroek is too small to make a good defence. The works on Fort Island, on the Essequibo, formerly mounted forty pieces of cannon, but Kykoveral, at the junction of the three rivers, Essequibo, Coioony, and Mazarooni, is the natural citadel of the colony.

CHAPTER III.

Desire to visit the interior.—Eldorado.—Sail to the Essequibo.
—Carelessness of negro crews.—Anecdote.—Islands of the
Essequibo.—Mazarooni and Coioony Rivers.—Few traces of
early Settlers.—The mighty Forests.—The Mora, Cotton,
Palmetto, and Mangrove trees.—The Campanero.—The
Tapir.—Manati.—American Leopard.—The Cayman.—Mon-
keys.—Deer.—Peccari Hogs, and other quadrupeds of Gui-
ana.—Parrots, Macaws, Vampires, Owls, and Goat-suckers.—
Aquatic birds.—Humming-birds.—The Cock of the Rock.—
Aboma Snake.—The Conacoushi, Labarri, and Rattlesnakes.
—Anecdote.—The Cobra of India.—The Pipa Frog.—Visit
a Dutch Entomologist.—Remarkable fishes.—Pacoo, Perai,
Silurus, Assa, electric Eel, Wurwureema.—The Frog-fish.—
Guiana a rich field for the Naturalist.—Awful solitude.—Ap-
proach of a Storm.—Geology of the Essequibo.—Woodcutters.
—A forest residence.—Wood-nymphs — Kykoveral.—The
post.—Visit an Indian settlement.

I REMAINED but a short time in Stabroek, for I was impatient to plunge into the primeval forests of the interior—to navigate the mighty rivers fertilizing regions unexplored by European travellers—to visit the nameless creeks overshadowed by the gloomy, though rich and luxuriant vegetation—to tread the soil of that country, ever famous since the days of Sir Walter Raleigh, as containing the magnificent city of Eldorado, which “for greatness, riches, and the excellent seat, far exceeded any city in the world, and founded on an inland

sea two hundred leagues long, like unto the Mare Caspium."

No Eldorado has ever yet been discovered, though a shallow lake called Parima exists between the Amazons and Oronoco; and the gallant courtier is right when he says, "he never saw a more beautiful country (than that to the south of the Oronoco), nor more lively prospects; hills so raised here and there over the valleys, the rivers winding into divers branches, the plains adjoining without bush or stubble, all fair green grass (in many parts), with ground of hard sand, easy to march on either for horse or foot; the deer crossing in every path; the birds toward the evening singing on every tree with a thousand several tunes; cranes and herons of white, crimson, and carnation, perching on the river's side; the air fresh, with a gentle easterly wind, and every stone that we stooped to pick up promised either gold or silver by its complexion."

Elated with pleasing anticipations, I embarked in a small schooner to sail up the great Essequibo river, in company with a Dutch physician, full of life and good humour, Dr. Speringshoek, and Mr. Hilhouse, a surveyor in British Guiana, and late of the staff corps, a gentleman who has seen more of the interior of Guiana, and is better acquainted with its natural productions and the habits of the wandering tribes of Indians, than any other person I know. I was extremely fortunate in my companions, and most thankful to these gentlemen for volunteering to accompany me.

The navigation at the entrance of the Essequibo is very dangerous from the shifting banks of sand : the coasting schooners constantly get aground there, and are sometimes totally wrecked ; but this is oftener owing to the carelessness of the crews than any other reason. It is difficult to keep even the steersman awake ; and I have seen him nodding over the tiller, and the vessel constantly taken aback, the captain during this time quietly asleep in the fore part of the schooner. The drogher belonging to the estate called Maria's pleasure, was totally lost a short time before I arrived at Stabroek ; and as an instance of the folly and carelessness of negro crews, I shall give a short anecdote.

Some time ago a schooner got aground between the Demerara and Essequibo rivers ; she lay in the mud for several tides, and at last was noticed by a pilot cutter, the master of which boarded the schooner, and found half the crew asleep ; the others were coolly roasting plantains. " Why don't you lay out a warp, and try to get your vessel off? if it comes on to blow, you will all be lost," said the pilot. " Me no care, suppose lost," replied Quaco ; " Massa schooner, massa nigger—all massa's loss."

At the mouth of the Essequibo, the three islands of Leguan, Waakenaam, and Tiger, are cultivated like gardens, and produce most luxuriant crops of coffee and sugar.

We sailed up the Essequibo for eighty miles,

and occasionally took to canoes, or coorials, to visit the creeks. We then went up a part of the Mazarooni, and saw also the unexplored Coioony. These three rivers join their waters about one hundred miles from the Atlantic.

In sailing or paddling up the stream, the breadth is so great, and the wooded islands so numerous, that it appears as if we navigated a large lake. The Dutch, in former times, had cotton, indigo, and cocoa estates up the Essequibo, and even beyond their old capital Kykoveral, at the forks or junction of the three rivers; at present, however, beyond the islands at the mouth of the Essequibo, there are no estates, and the mighty forest has obliterated all traces of former cultivation. There is solitude and silence on either hand; and not a vestige of the dwellings of the Hollanders is to be seen; but occasionally in struggling through the entangled brushwood, one stumbles over a marble tombstone, brought from the shores of the Zuyder Zee, covering the remains of a Hollander.

“ An hundred summer suns had showered
 Their fostering warmth and radiance bright,
 Since first this remnant of his race
 Did tenant his lone dwelling-place.”

And truly one is tempted to exclaim, that such a mercenary, cold-hearted, and cruel people to their slaves as the early Dutch settlers generally appear to have been, from the painfully interesting narrative of Stedman, deserve as richly to lose their valuable possessions, as the Spaniards did for their

barbarities to the unoffending Indians : at the same time it must not be forgotten that, fifty years ago, our own planters, with their negro task-masters, too often grievously oppressed and abused their sable bondsmen ; but to the honour of the nation, a mighty change for the better has taken place.

At every turn of the river we descried objects of great interest ; the dense and nearly impenetrable forest itself occupied our chief attention. Magnificent trees, altogether new to me, were anchored to the ground by the bush rope. Convolvuli, and the flowers of parasitical plants of every variety, caused the woods to appear as if hung with garlands. Pre-eminent above the other sons of the forest, was the “towering and majestic mora,” its trunk spread out into buttresses ; and on its top would be seen the king of the vultures, spreading out its immense wings to dry after the dews of night.

Rivalling the mora in height, and surpassing it in beauty, was the silk cotton tree. A naturalist might study for days one of these grand objects, produced by exuberant nature from the richest mould, with the combined advantages of a tropical sun and a moist atmosphere, and still he would find something new and much to wonder at. Yet the timber is not valuable, and the cotton is only used for pillows. Let us pause awhile, and admire the noble shaft, eighty feet in height, without knot or branch, and its grey surface smooth and shining as if polished by the hand of man : high overhead it

stretches out its great limbs, partly hidden by the bright green leaves, forming a mighty pillared shade, fit to grace the foreground of a *Salvator Rosa*.

Supporting many other plants, and a numerous colony of animated nature, on the topmost branches of the tree are seen the wild pine ; while the vines descending like shrouds to the earth, afford to the traveller a pleasant beverage, for, if skilfully cut with the knife, the water gushes out, as from the rock in the wilderness at the touch of the rod of Moses. The opossums and other small quadrupeds, ascending by the vines, drink from the deep cup of the pines, which contains nearly a quart of water, collected from the dews and rain. In the forks of the branches are seen the black clay nests of the wood ant, with double galleries down the stem, by which the tiny colonists ascend and descend without interrupting each other. Sometimes the marabuntahs, or wild bees, occupy the place of the ants, and are surrounded by the hanging nests of the black and yellow mocking birds ; they live sociably together, and it is said that the bees attack the foes of the orioles, but these last ungratefully forgetting their obligations to their neighbours, attempt to kidnap them when their young cry for food.

Here and there, singly or in groups, the palmetto royal reared its head, one hundred feet in height, and the stem seven or eight in thickness ; the straight grey pillar terminated in a green and

edible shaft, affording the mountain cabbage; then the branches, fifteen feet in length, spread out horizontally, from which depended the close-set, pinnated, and pointed leaves, agitated by the slightest breath of air. From the midst of the leafy diadem a green spike appeared, said to be a lightning conductor. On the soft bank of the streams the red mangrove from trunk and branches sent down its ligneous shoots, to anchor it to the shifting soil; whilst the white mangrove on harder ground dispensed with supports.

Whilst we lay in the noon-day heat, shadowed under the thick wood, the very peculiar and romantic cry of the campanero, or bell-bird, would be heard at intervals; it is white, about the size of a pigeon, with a leathery excrescence on its forehead, and the sound which it produces in the lone woods is like that of a convent bell tolling at a distance.

A crash of reeds and brushwood on the river's bank would be followed by a tapir, the western elephant, coming down to drink and roll his dark hide in the mud. In bulk he is about the size of an ox, with thick legs and a short prehensile proboscis. The maipoori, manati, or river cow, would lift its black head and small piercing eye above water, to graze on the leaves of the coridore tree. These harmless animals are shot from a stage fixed in the water with branches of their favourite food hanging from it; in form they resemble the common seal, and one of twenty-two hundred weight was killed not long ago.

A shout from the negro boatmen eagerly gazing at the middle of the river, would point out the head of the spotted jaguar, or American leopard. Swimming strongly across, and fearless of the aquatic monsters doubtless following in his wake, he dashes the water aside with his muscular paws; a long ripple goes from either flank; he approaches the bank, and, impatient to land, springs vigorously from the stream, and with a growl of defiance disappears among the canes and moco mocos.

A long-drawn and heavy sigh would direct attention to apparently a gnarled and black log of wood under the river's bank; it would then begin slowly to move towards the water, and a green and malignant eye would be turned to the spectator; horrid claws would be observed sinking into the slime over which was dragged a bloated and scaly body, ending in a pointed tail, with strength in it to break the leg of a horse. The long jaws would open and shut with a snapping noise, displaying the rows of sharp white teeth; headlong it would plunge into the river, and reappear far up the stream. This is the cayman, or alligator, which is found in all the tropical rivers of America: one I saw in the Essequibo was of the great length of twenty-two feet: of such a monster it might be said, "He esteemed iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood; the arrow could not make him flee, darts were counted as stubble, and he laughed at the shaking of the spear."

The trees of the forests, matted together by the

bush rope, here running up their stem, and there joining branch to branch, were at times alive on each side of the river with the restless sacca-winkee, or small red monkey with a white face. They travel from tree to tree with facility by means of the wild vines; and numerous families of these active little creatures, with their offspring on their backs, may be seen disporting themselves among the leaves and feeding on the nuts, far removed above their enemies, the snakes, below.

Advancing up a creek, the wanderer may come to a lonely spot, rocks and trees casting broad shadows into the pools, and he will there see the spotted wirrebocerra, or red bajeer deer, reposing at noon, or rushing with panting sides to the water. The flesh of both these deer is delicious eating, particularly that of the wirrebocerra.

Rushing through entangled brushwood will be heard a score or two of piccaree hogs, remarkable for the gland on the back, emitting a fetid odour, which some improperly suppose to be the navel. The ant bear, tree porcupine, the scaly armadillo, and the languid sloth are not unfrequently met with in traversing these luxuriant and unbroken forests; but above all the red men desire to meet with the amphibious laaba, about the size of a pig a year old, with short neck and legs, and the body brown with white spots, affording flesh, rich and delicate. It is a saying in Guiana, "that he who eats laaba and drinks creek water will be sure to

return to the country." I did both, and the grateful flavour of the former is still present in my recollection.

When the sun sinks rapidly in the west, and disappears behind the trees like a fiery target, gorgeous macaws and screaming parrots fly in pairs overhead, returning from their feeding-grounds to their favourite roosts; the dreaded vampire then leaves the shady nook or hollow tree where he had dozed during the day, and flits on ebon and leathery wing along the river's bank. Not unfrequently he attacks the naked foot of the sleeper in his hammock under the trees, applies the cylindrical tongue, and whilst dexterously cupping, gently fans the foot with his wings in an ecstasy of delight—the sleeper awakes faint and exhausted, and sees below him a pool of his own gore. These foul bats are sometimes three feet from wing to wing.

During the night the owls and goat-suckers lament with ominous cry, and at early dawn the black hannaqua loudly repeats its own name; the woodpeckers commence their hammering on the decayed trunks, and the mighty-billed toucans yelp from the loftiest trees.

Near the mouths of the rivers the curry-curry, or scarlet curlew, stalks conspicuously among other aquatic birds; and the pelican and spoonbill are seen with flocks of ducks and teal. Water fowl, in particular, are so numerous on the coasts of Guiana at particular seasons of the year, that huntsmen

say, you may bring down an acre of them in a day ! or like the renowned Munchausen, spit half a dozen ducks on the ramrod at one shot.

With active though invisible wing, the minute humming birds are often observed, the metallic lustre of their plumage glistening in the sunbeam :

“ The winglet of the fairy humming-bird,
Like atoms of the rainbow fluttering round.”

Darting from flower to flower of the shrubs planted near the habitations of the settlers, they extract a honeyed repast of sweets and insects with the slender filaments of their tongues, and too often are they shot by the idler sitting listlessly in his shady piazza, not for the purpose of preserving the delicate skins, but out of sheer wantonness.

Far removed from the haunts of men, sits the cock of the rock, in orange plumage, so brilliant that some will say it is impossible to look steadfastly on it. It is a crested bird, about the size of a pigeon, and of an elegant form ; but I must not stop to describe at greater length the great variety of the feathered tribe that are met with in these wilds, but merely mention the names of the scarlet and blue aras, the great trumpeter and powese, or peacock pheasant, the brown marrodee, the spotted tiger bird, the blue bird, and the rice bird, the green sparrow, and, above all, the kishee kishee, the size of a lark, but decorated with splendid plumage, the various colours of which are beautifully arranged so as to enchant the eye of every beholder.

Nourished in hot swamps is the mighty camoodi, aboma or boa : he drags his great bulk to the edge of his favourite marsh, and lies in wait for the passing deer, or even the wandering Indian ; suddenly he twines round his victim, breaks the yielding bones of his prey, (writhing in helpless agony,) covers it with saliva, and slowly gorges the prepared morsel. But far more dreaded by the red man, is the conacoushi. Waterton, the prince and paragon of wanderers in desert places, enthusiastic as a naturalist, and peerless as a preserver of birds, of this formidable snake beautifully says, " Unrivalled in his display of every lovely colour of the rainbow, and unmatched in the effects of his deadly poison, the conacoushi glides undaunted on ; sole monarch of these forests, both man and beast fly before him, and allow him to pursue an undisputed path." The conacoushi is better known by the name of bush-master ; I saw one twelve feet long, and his general appearance was that of the head of the ugliest toad on the foul body of a serpent. The Indians avoid this monster by means of their dogs, sent in advance to warn their masters of the bush-masters occupying the path ; but I have also been made aware of the vicinity of a poisonous snake by the strong musky odour left by it in its progress through the herbage.

The labarri is nearly as poisonous as the conacoushi, and is sometimes killed in Stabroek. No object can be conceived more horrid than this reptile ; when irritated, every scale rises from its body

like the feathers of a cock, the eye sparkles with malignant ire, and the open jaws show the long fangs ready to dart the venom into the shrinking limb.

But let the sceptic who says in his proud heart "there is no God," be covered with confusion, when he is told that a merciful Creator has provided certain remarkable plants which grow near the haunts of these deadly snakes, and are effectual remedies against their bites; and He has clearly pointed out to the naked and ignorant Indian, by the spotted stems of these plants, resembling the colour of the poisonous reptiles, by their coiled roots and flowers like the open-mouthed serpent, that there is yet a balm in Gilead.

Rattlesnakes are common in almost all parts of America, and in Guiana they are not wanting; there are also tree and water snakes of several varieties: of the rattlesnake I may here give an original anecdote.

A stout negro belonging to a friend near Stabroek, brought in from the bush two rattlesnakes in a box; he seemed to have completely subdued them by intimidation, and after a time he would let them out in the verandah, and they would return to him at his call. One day they were missing, and the negro's master going to an out-house, saw them coiled up under the step of the door, he was a long time imprisoned, but at last plucked up courage and sprang into the open air over them. The negro went out with his box to

catch them, "Ah! you damn rascal, you go way! Get in house this minute," said Quaco, and the reptiles obeyed him! Sometimes he would irritate his pets, and they would bite him in the hand, then he would run out to the high grass near the house, and rub the wound with a plant, the name of which he would not reveal, for his fellow slaves looked on him with great respect from his being a snake-charmer. At last, on one occasion, he got drunk, began handling the snakes, they bit him, he neglected to apply his antidote, went to the field to work, and in a short time was a bloated corpse.

I have seen the cobra *dé capello*, or hooded snake of India, caught in my garden, have watched the snake-charmer with feathered turban sitting beside a hole under the hedge of prickly pear, and piping on a rude musical instrument made from a gourd and a bit of looking-glass in front of it;—unlike "the deaf adder," the head of the cobra would soon appear above ground as if listening to the wild strains, and his eye attracted by the dazzling glass. An assistant would be ready to catch him behind the neck, would draw forth his yellow and writhing length, and without extracting the poisonous fangs, would slip him into a covered basket, muttering the usual curse of "Hut Teré." Next day the charmer would return, place his basket on the ground, sit on his haunches before it and pipe, the lid would rise, and the subdued snake come forth, partly coil himself up, and move his head to the music, and ever and anon display his spectacled

hood, or hiss when the charmer approached his hand; the assistant would go behind and hold up the reptile by the tail, then he could not do injury, but if a fowl were to be thrown at him, it would be dead in a few minutes. What I have said of tame rattlesnakes is less surprising than the feats of oriental snake charmers with the cobra.

The pipa or Guiana frog, hideous as a toad, and of the size of a duck, abounds in all the pools: the combined croak of a number of these reptiles amounts almost to a roar in loudness: the tadpoles come to maturity by attaching themselves to granules on the back of the mother. Though harmless, the pipa is a most disgusting animal.

Whilst on the Essequibo I heard of a recluse who collected insects, and I went in a canoe to visit him. I landed in a cane brake, up to the knees in mud, and scrambled for half a mile through an entangled and swampy path to his retreat. A small open space in the forest was cultivated as a cassava-field, and in the midst of it stood a close and an open shed for the cold rains and the dry weather. Mynheer Faber, a thin, grey-headed man, displayed before me a rich and valuable entomological collection, consisting of the most beautiful varieties of butterflies and moths, of beetles in coats of shining armour, lantern and fire-flies of different species, the remarkable walking leaves, gigantic bush-spiders, the red-footed tarantula, centipedes a foot long, and scorpions whose bite occasions fevers and death in a few hours. I was

strongly tempted to purchase, but when I came to inquire the prices that Mynheer affixed to a double tray of selections from the Guiana insects, I refrained from indulging myself. M. Faber asked 10 joes, or 15*l.* for what he collected about his own door, so I made my salam and returned from whence I came.

I saw many remarkable fishes of species unknown in Europe, for the river ichthyology of Guiana requires yet to be described. Mr. Hilhouse has applied himself to this branch of zoological inquiry, and is making a large collection of valuable drawings of the finny tribes of Guiana; and it is to be hoped that he will one day make them public, with descriptive letter-press.

Many of the Guiana river-fish are of the most delicious flavour, and afford excellent sport to the angler. Among others, the pacoo, which is found near the rapids of the Essequibo, is flat, twenty inches in length, and weighs four pounds. It feeds on the seeds of the *arum arborescens*, in devouring which the Indians shoot it with their arrows. Of similar genus are the cartaback, waboory, and omah.

The perai or omah, is deservedly dreaded by the swimmer in the Guiana waters. It is two feet long, and its teeth and jaws are so strong that it cracks the shells of most nuts to feed on their kernels, and is most voracious, for the Indians say that it will snap off the breast of a woman or one of the extremities with the greatest ease. The genus

silurus is very remarkable, for the young swim in shoals of one hundred and fifty over the head of the mother, who at the approach of danger opens her mouth—they rush in, and she swims off with her progeny to a place of safety.

The loricaria calicthys, or assa, constructs a nest on the surface of the pools from the floating blades of grass; in this it deposits its spawn, which are hatched by the sun. In the dry season this singular fish, however incredible it may appear, has been dug out of the ground in the broad savannahs, for it burrows in the rains, owing to the strength and power of the spine and gill-fin, and the body being covered with strong plates. Far below the surface it finds moisture to keep it alive till the rain again converts the plains into shallow lakes.

The electric eel, a well-known inhabitant of these waters, has sometimes nearly proved fatal to the strong swimmer, for if it paralyzes him with its touch, he sinks at once to the bottom. I have seen electric eels eight feet long; their head is broad, and below they are keel-shaped. If this fish is sent to England in tubs, the wood and iron act as conductors, and keep the fish in a continued state of exhaustion, causing eventually death. An earthenware jar is the vessel in which to keep it in health.

The fish called wurwureema (a tetrodon), though only three inches in length, resembles the bush-master of the woods, for it not only disdains to

retreat before man but inflicts a bite of the most deadly poison. When first taken out of the water it blows itself out like a ball.

Lastly, I shall notice the *rana paradoxa*, or frog-fish, perhaps the most singular production of Guiana; first a fish of five inches long, then gradually assuming legs, and losing its tail, it becomes a frog of a pea-green colour, leaves the water, and emits a melancholy note before rain.

I have thus given a sketch of the treasures that are to be met with on the surface of British Guiana. As a pupil of one of the most distinguished naturalists of the age, Professor Jameson, I might have been expected to enter more fully into the natural history of the colony, but I am fearful of fatiguing many of those who honour these pages with perusal; I therefore briefly state, that I know of no finer field in the universe for a naturalist to distinguish himself in than that of Guiana. There are vast mineral treasures yet to be discovered in the mountain ranges; the most valuable gums, spices, and medicinal plants abound in these romantic woods, scented by the sweet hyawa; and in a morning's walk, under the matted trees, or by the side of the lonely creek, new species of insects, inhabiting the land or water, are continually to be met with. Let this rich harvest then be reaped by some able hand, and let "the natural history of British Guiana" teach the public to appreciate the noble possessions of England in South America.

But let not the wanderer imagine that whilst

voyaging by land or water in Guiana, he will meet with animated nature at every step ; no—the forests may be trodden for hours, and not a sound be heard, or a quadruped or bird seen. Creeks silent as the grave may be navigated for miles, and at last an approaching shower will alone relieve the awful solitude. First the heavy drops are heard at a little distance, singly among the leaves, then they fall around, and lastly, the rushing blast sweeps through the foliage, forked lightning displays the forms of the trunks and branches, and the thunder-cloud in dark majesty moves across the welkin—

“ And then the mighty organ of the wind
Raised up that tuneful anthem which has rung
Since the creation day !”

The fertile soil near the mouth of the Essequibo was still seen higher up the river, and the decayed trees and leaves afforded a rich mould over the clayey bottom. Still higher up, the alluvium of the estuary was changed for white sandstone on the immediate river's bank, and I saw occasionally black oxide of manganese. The rocks at the forks were of a granitic nature. Inland were seen wooded hills of small elevation, which no one has perhaps ever visited : the Indians think they are inhabited by demons ; and their distance from the river prevented the early settlers occupying them.

Scattered along the banks of the Essequibo, at wide intervals, are the lonely residences of a few woodcutters, of Dutch descent. They send down

to Stabroek logs of the ducollubola, rivalling mahogany, the bouracourra or letter-wood, the durable green-heart, the tough hackea, ebony, and iron-wood, and receive in return cloth, powder, shot, &c. Their wants are few, for they live like the Indians, on cassava bread, and pepperpot, and drink creek water, with a modicum of rum when they can procure it.

I visited several of the houses of these Backwoodsmen; some consisted of only two rooms, others had more pretension; Mynheer Hoenkirk's was two-storied, with gable ends to the front, a stoop or gallery to the upper story, where a Hollander could enjoy a quiet pipe, and a most noble view of the broad river, studded with its wooded islands. The house was shaded with palms, and under a spreading pomeroze tree was the tomb of a brother, surrounded with rails. It was an affecting sight, and I often remarked in Guiana that the mouldering remains of a near relative repose in the corner of the garden of those who loved him when living, and who constantly desire to cherish his memory when dead.

“ What doth it matter then, if thus
 Without a stone, without a name,
 To impotently herald us,
 We float not on the breath of fame,
 But like the dew-drop from the flower
 Pass, after glittering an hour ?”

There was plain furniture in the rooms, which were clean and neatly boarded; and we were served with pepperpot of guana, (a large lizard, delicate

to eat, but not particularly agreeable to view,) also the fish called querriman; we dipped the roasted plantains into the rich sauce, and washed down the pungent food with weak spirits and water.

There were no beds in the house, but net hammocks were slung across the principal rooms by ropes of the silk grass plant; and we slept in these till morning, and enjoyed a cool and a delicious repose, undisturbed by the stings of the mosquitoes of the coast. Behind Mynheer Hoenkirk's peaceful retreat was the endless and entangled forest, and through it there were a few paths, one of exceeding beauty, for it followed the course of a clear rivulet, and opened out into little glades, in which stood groups of moras, and across which the light-footed wirrebocarra deer would skip, or a herd of the peccaree hog rush pursued by the spotted jaguar.

The females one meets with in these wood-cutters' houses are one or two Dutch girls, some fair as the flowers of their own savannahs, a few mulattas and negresses. The brown men are excessively indolent, and it is no unusual thing to see one of these stout fellows fast asleep in the bottom of a canoe with a bottle of rum in close embrace, and allowing himself to glide down with the stream, with fishing-lines fastened to his toes.

The fort of Kykoveral is an interesting remnant of the old masters of the Essequibo, the Dutch. A coat-of-arms is yet to be traced over the gateway, and the high walls which enclosed the island to the water's edge are still in tolerable preservation. The

site of Kykoveral is most picturesque, for it is at the forks of the three rivers, but it has long been deserted, and the ancient capital of Essequibo, like the estates on the banks of the river, has been buried under rank vegetation. There is the house of a Post-holder near Kykoveral; his duty is to report to the Protector of Indians at Stabroek the proceedings of the red men, and to prevent, if possible, suspicious characters proceeding into the interior. The triennial presents are distributed to the Indians here, when hundreds assemble from their different settlements in the wilderness, and bring their wives and children in their large coorials or canoes, and live for some days at the post in open logies or sheds prepared for their reception. The post is on a high rocky bank, and below it the clear stream runs swift and deep; here, two years ago, a son of Sir Benjamin D'Urban leaped from a rock to bathe, in the middle of the day, and was never again seen in life.

We were in the Mazarooni river, and observed a family of Indians crossing the stream in their log canoe and disappearing under the bush on the opposite side. Mr. Hilhouse and myself paddled after them in a small coorial, and landed under some locust trees, and found an Indian settlement. The logies were open all round, and thatched with the leaves of the trooly palm, some of them twenty-four feet long. Suspended from the bamboo timbers of the roof were grass hammocks: in these the men were lazily swinging; one or two of those who were

awake were fashioning arrow heads out of the cockarito palm. The men and children were entirely naked, with the exception of the blue lap or cloth for the loins, the lap of the former ending in a fringed tail, and bands of beads were round the wrists and ankles of the latter. The young women in their blue petticoats, braided hair, hands stained with the seed of the arnotto, like the rosy-fingered and gazel-eyed beauties of Persia, were scraping the roots of the bitter or poisonous cassava tree into a trough of bark ; it was then put into a long press of matting, which expressed the poisonous juice ; the dry farina was afterwards baked on an iron plate, and the juice converted by boiling into cassereep for the savoury pepperpot.

The old women were weaving the square coöoo, or lap of beads, which they wear sometimes without a petticoat, also armlets and ankle ornaments of beads, the wampum of the North-American Indians. Some were fabricating clay pots, and all the females seemed actively employed. Parrots and saccawin-kee monkeys were on the rafters, and little sharp-nosed dogs and spotted fly-catchers were below. I was attracted by the arms scattered about the logies—the short and heavy war-clubs, a rifle or two, bows and arrows, with many barbs for shooting fish, and with blunted heads for stunning birds, and above all the blow-pipe made of a straight reed sixteen feet long, by means of which the miniature arrows dipped in Wourali poison, and ending in

cotton balls, are projected with deadly aim to the distance of three hundred feet.

The Indians stared at us without speaking, and we sat down in empty hammocks and commenced swinging like the rest. I caught up a red boy, a chubby-faced firm little rogue of a year and a-half old, and tickled him till he screamed with laughing; his mother, who was pounding maize in a wooden mortar, ceased from her labour, and courteously offered us casséree in a gourd—a crimson liquor made from the sweet potatoe; of this I partook, and found it to taste like cider: however, I politely declined the pywarree. This intoxicating beverage is like thick rice-water, and is prepared by the sweet mouths of the Indian fair, old and young: they chew the cassava flower, spit it into a wooden trough, or sometimes a small canoe, add water, the liquor ferments, and at the pywarree feasts the men sit round the vessel, and the entertainers and their guests roll in the sand, drunk for two or three days together: their tender helpmates look after them, and keep them from being suffocated with the sand getting into their mouths. But pywarree is a harmless liquor, that is to say, it does not produce the disease and baneful effects of spirits; for after a sleep the Indians rise fresh and well, and only occasionally indulge in a debauch of this kind.

We saw the fish and birds which the men had just shot with their arrows, brought out of their canoe and *barbacoted* or smoke-dried on a grating

of bamboo over the fire ; and we then followed an aged Indian with a cutlass to the small fields of cassava cleared by girdling and burning part of the forest behind the logies. The cassava plant is four feet in height, has a knotted ash-coloured stem, with slender branches at the top, from whence proceed the red footstalks of the broad digitated leaves ; the white root is cylindrical and a foot long. In the bitter, or poisonous cassava, is a fibre, which the sweet wants.

The Indians, above described, were Arrawaks, and we afterwards saw Accaways, Caribs, &c. and I have seldom experienced greater pleasure than in visiting the settlements of these children of nature, passing their days under the majestic trees by the side of the oozy creek, or clear and rapid stream, sometimes listlessly reclining in their hammocks, then, instigated by the calls of hunger, proceeding warily and stealthily through the bush in quest of game ; at one time paddling their canoe up the river, dragging it up the rapids, and nimbly springing from rock to rock with a stout towing-rope of nibbee or vine in their hand, and animating each other to exertion by short and impatient shouts. A small cataract is to be passed, the canoe is unloaded and transported on the shoulders to the still water above, and the voyage is resumed. The creek teeming with the finny tribes is visited below the foam of a cascade, and dammed up ; the roots of the Hyaree tree poison the water, and in a short time the fish rise to the surface, agitated, and for a

time drunk with the tainted element. The Indians are then all life and agility, dart from their long bows their barbed arrows, and their women plunge into the pool and bear the rich prize to the bank. Again they descend the river to their logies and shoot the rapids, the steersmen sit in silence and watchfulness with balanced paddle at the head and stern of the canoe, glancing on either side their practised eye ; the water boiling and roaring among the rocks sends them breathless into the midst of the breakers, crested with foam ; the spray dashes into the frail bark, but the danger is past, and with a wild chorus they regain their lowly sheds.

CHAPTER IV.

On the Indians of British Guiana.—Population.—The names of the Tribes.—The Arrawaks.—Best known to the Settlers.— Practise polygamy.—Inconveniences of this system.—How to win a Bride.—Shameful conduct of some Europeans.—Dreadful effects of seduction.—The Indian not unwilling to be related to the white man.—The birth of a child.—Named by the Peïman.—How the Indians spend their time.—Rum ought to be prohibited.—Hospitality of the Indians.—The behaviour of the Indians in the house of an European.—Indian deportment.—Highly useful as Bush-rangers.—Diseases.—The Village of the Dead.—Funeral Ceremonies.—Indian Theology.—Tradition of the Creation.—Of the Deluge.—Never address the Deity.—The Accaways.—Wourali poison.—The Caribisce.—The Wurrows.—The Macoushis.—Indian language.—Indians ought to be reclaimed.—The Protectors and Postholders.—Their Duties.—Their Character.—Roguary of a Postholder.—The Soil and Climate of the Indian country.—Adapted for colonization.—A settlement recommended.—Moral and religious Instruction.—Indian labourers.—Labour of Sexes equal.—Mismanagement of Indian affairs.—A remedy proposed.—Colonial policy.

THE Indian population which inhabits British Guiana is estimated at twenty thousand souls, but only about five thousand of these receive presents from the Colonial Government, the rest are wanderers, extending their migrations from the Amazons to the Oronoco. The principal tribes are the Arrawaks, Accaways, Caribisce, Wurrows, and Macoushis.

The Arrawaks are best known to the European settlers on the coast, as they continually visit the towns and plantations, and many of them live on the creeks near the sea; they are invaluable as bush rangers, and for tracking run-away slaves; and rendered great assistance to the colony in the insurrection of 1823, when the Missionary Smith was supposed to have instigated the negroes to insubordination.

The Arrawaks practise polygamy, and I have seen one man with two sisters as his wives, and another with two middle-aged women, and a young girl who was to succeed them, all living apparently in great harmony; but I have been assured by those well acquainted with Indians, that in the forests of the West, as much inconvenience is experienced as in the harems of the East, by the lord of a plurality of wives. In the latter he retreats for a time "to smoke the pipe of patience," till the domestic broils have ceased; whereas in the former he hesitates not to use a stout bush rope to restore order. Indian wives are won by presents to the parents; or when the lady herself is wooed, the Shakspearian maxim is followed:

"Win her with gifts, if she respects not words;

Dumb jewels often in their silent kind,

More than quick words, do move a woman's mind."

The descent is traced from the family of the mother. Though in public a native sense of propriety prevents the men caressing the women, yet they are extremely attached both to them and to

their offspring, and the children never receive personal correction. It was with feelings of unmingled disgust that I remarked some Europeans uncovering the bosoms of the Arrawak women in presence of their husbands, and otherwise behaving rudely to these inoffensive people. Coarse must that mind be, and destitute of all sense of propriety, which induces an individual to outrage so grossly another's feelings.

A short time before I arrived in the colony, a brown man had induced the young wife of an Arrawak to visit him. The husband saw his wife leave the house of the seducer, and led her to his logie : there he taxed her with her infidelity ; she confessed she was deserving of death, and the husband acknowledging his fondness for her, avowed that he was unable to wipe off the stain his honour had sustained if she looked at him ; on which she deliberately turned her back, and he struck her to the ground with his heavy war club, and then stabbed her. The Arrawak's friends gave him up to the Fiscal, to prevent a " bellum internecivum," or war of mutual extermination. He was tried, and found guilty of murder, and the sentence remitted for approval to England. The brother of the woman declared in court, that if the husband was not hanged, he would have his life, though it cost him his own. After this, what more need be said to show the fatal consequences of a libertine interfering with the domestic concerns of the Arrawaks ?

But the Indian is not unwilling to give one of

his nation to be an helpmate to the white man, and is even proud of the connexion. The Dutch possessed great influence over the tribes, by selecting their mistresses from among them, while the English, by some extraordinary perversity of taste, prefer the daughters of Africa.

I was anxious to ascertain whether an extraordinary custom prevailed among the Arrawaks of which I had read, viz. that on the birth of a child the lazy father lies in his hammock, acts the part of a woman indisposed, and is nursed for some weeks by his family. I was assured that this was not the case; that the father merely receives in his hammock the congratulations of his friends, and does not act so ridiculous a part as has been formerly described.

The child is named by the pëiman, or magician, and doctor of the tribe, who is distinguished by possessing a calabash containing certain seeds and shining pebbles, and ornamented with parrots' feathers; with this he performs his incantations, and is besides possessed of a knowledge of medicinal herbs.

The Indian leads a life of the most luxurious ease. A bountiful nature supplies all his wants, and the climate obviates the necessity for clothes. For two months in the year he cultivates his cassava, and raises a supply of farinaceous food, which, with game and fish, is sufficient for the remainder of the year. Then, like the French Canadians, he visits his friends, and sings, dances, and drinks pywarree.

I was pained to see the Europeans pay the Indians for any little articles they purchased from them, as a parrot, pegals or baskets, models of buck houses, or bows and arrows, with the health-destroying rum. Indians are *not* naturally fond of spirits; and young men to whom it is offered for the first time, constantly refuse it, but by persuasion they are at last induced to taste "the poisoned chalice," and the usual consequences follow:—Disease, death, and the extinction of families. Oh! cursed destroyer of happiness, soon may there be an end of thy pernicious influence!

The Indians are extremely hospitable, and I was delighted to see the readiness with which food and drink was offered to the stranger. An Indian visitor, naked and armed for the chase, on coming into a hut, says to the man dozing in his hammock, and who may never have seen him before, "Prooha meroo," (I am come,) to which the other replies deliberately, "Cherré," (sit down,) and no other introduction is required, but food and lodging immediately tendered.

When the Indians untie their hammocks and visit the whites, the women and children are commonly left with the coorials in the neighbouring creek, and the men walk quietly through the house or sit on their hams in the verandah, smoking tobacco rolled up in a leaf; they will not pilfer if confidence is placed in them, and are ready to barter their handywork for cloth or cutlery. In the lonely "bush," or in a crowded assembly, they

are grave and sedate in their demeanour, graceful in their action, upright in their carriage, and rarely express astonishment at novel sights; this may be natural to them, but my old friends the Persian Kizzilbash are *taught* to suppress their wonder, and to contemplate strange sights with *sang-froid*, as if they had been long accustomed to them.

Light of foot and unencumbered with dress or heavy knapsack, the Indian will march three times the distance that an European soldier would in a day, and their sagacity in tracing those of whom they may be in pursuit is quite astonishing. Their senses of hearing and seeing are most acute; sounds unheeded by the dull ear of the whites immediately convey intelligence to the red-man, and the pressed leaf in the path, or the broken twig, not only inform him that he of whom he is in pursuit has gone before, but the very time he has passed that way.

The Indians of Guiana are subject to few diseases, though small-pox contracted on the coast sometimes cuts off whole tribes. Thus, I was told by a friend that once, on an expedition to some of the streams that fall into the Oronoco from the south, he landed with his Arrawak followers to pass the night at an Indian settlement of at least a hundred logies; in the sheds, the hammocks, cooking pots, and arms, were all in the usual order, but there were no other signs of the inhabitants. Thinking they were gone on an expedition into the bush, the travellers took possession of one of the logies, ate and slept in it. In the morning, a

wood-skin, or the bark of a purple heart-tree, suspended from the rafters, was seen to contain a corpse, and on examining the other logies, they were each found to contain two or three dead bodies. The Arrawaks were alarmed, and precipitately fled from this village of the dead; and it was afterwards ascertained that the small-pox having appeared among this (extinct) tribe of Indians, the Spaniards had isolated them, and they had been cut off nearly to a man. The Indians when attacked by this frightful disease, cannot be made to believe that the cold-bath is very dangerous; they plunge into the stream when the burning fever is on them, and the virus which would otherwise expend itself on the surface, is driven inwardly with fatal effect—the pëiman all the while rattling his calabash, blowing the fumes of tobacco over the patient, and screaming horribly.

The Indians of Guiana frequently bury their dead under the floors of their logies, and burn a fire over the grave for some time afterwards. Sometimes they desert the spot where their friends have died, and seek a new settlement. The annual feast of the dead is said to prevail among some of the tribes far in the interior: all who have died since the former feast, are disinterred and brought from considerable distances to be interred in one spot. It must be an awfully impressive ceremony. The recent corpse loathsome with corruption; in others the flesh wasted away, and the skin alone covering the bones like parchment; and then of some, the

skeleton alone remaining! See these poor people piously collecting the loved remains of their departed friends, renewing their lamentations and their grief, and with rude pomp and ceremony again committing them in honour to their native earth. Though the feelings of the inhabitants of the Old World may be shocked at this savage solemnity in the New, let them not deny that the Indians of America are capable of affection towards one another, and continue their regard for their relatives even beyond the grave.

“How sorrowful their hearts! when to their dead
The last sad melancholy rite was paid,
They buried their old men and the young boy,
And the athletic hunter, in their last
And narrow home, and mournfully departed.”

The Arrawaks say that they believe in a supreme Creator of all things, who has a brother, the Governor of the Universe; there is also an Evil Spirit, (Yabahoo,) whom they endeavour to conciliate by means of their peïmen, who attempt to cast out the Evil Spirit with their calabash.

Their tradition of the creation is, that the Great Spirit sat on a silk cotton-tree, and cut off pieces of bark, which he threw into the stream below him, and they became animated, and assumed the forms of all animals. That man at last was created, that a deep sleep fell upon him, that he was touched by the Deity, and when he awoke he found a wife by his side. The world becoming desperately wicked was drowned by a flood, only one man was saved

in a canoe, from this he sent out *a rat*, to discover if the waters had subsided, and it returned with a head of Indian corn.

The Indians believe in “free will,” and have neither priesthood nor form of worship; they say that it is unnecessary to address the Creator in prayer, for that as he is supremely just, he will not give any one undue precedence on supplication, neither will he willingly afflict his creatures. By incantations they attempt to propitiate the Evil Spirit.

Further removed from the coast than the Arrawaks are the Accaways; in stature they differ not from the former, but are more energetic, quarrelsome, and insubordinate to their chiefs. Under proper leaders they are capable of the most desperate enterprises, and are universally dreaded by the other wandering tribes.

It is the Accaways who principally prepare the wourali poison from the wourali vine, certain bulbous roots known only to themselves, with the addition of the muneery, or large black ant, and the fangs of the Conacoushi, labarri, and rattlesnakes.

The Caribisce inhabit the upper country, between the Essequibo and Coioony, and are a manly and intrepid race. Those that I saw were fairer than the Arrawaks, and I was particularly struck with the noble bearing of a young chief on a visit to an Arrawak family, from the members of which he was distinguished by a dash of red

arnotto under the eyes, and a chintz scarf gracefully crossed over his broad chest.

The houses of the Caribisce are all roof, and not open at the sides, like the logies of the Arrawaks; and they have a tradition that they once inhabited the West India islands.

The Wurrows occupy the coast between the Pomeroon and Oronoco: though a black and wretched-looking race, they are very skilful boat-builders, and construct the Spanish launches, so famed for elegance and speed. The food of the Wurrows is principally fish, and the edible part of the eta, or mauritia, from which invaluable tree they also manufacture their hammocks and baskets, and with the leaves thatch their sheds. Occasionally the Wurrows visit Stabroek, to barter smoked and salted querryman (mugil) for cloth and cutlery.

Far in the deep recesses of the forests of the interior, dwell, in constant dread, the persecuted Macoushis; they surround their dwellings with poisoned stakes, carry continually about them, in the tooth of the cayman or alligator, deadly poison, and when they suspect a guest of treachery, they take a little of this under the nail and mix it with the bread, and thus relieve themselves of their fears. The other tribes plunder them of their property and kidnap them without mercy, but not always with impunity, for the cunning of the Macoushis is very great, and they are implacable in their revenge.

The language of the South American Indians is necessarily very copious, from the immense number of objects of natural history with which they are surrounded, for all of which they have appropriate names.

The origin of nations is to be learned from an analogy of features and language, and few have yet made a study of the different dialects of South America. The researches of my friend Mr. Ranking, as to the origin of the American Indians, are extremely interesting and well worthy of attention ; and it appears to me, from the similarity of colour and feature between the inhabitants of Eastern Asia and the Guiana Indians, that that learned antiquary is borne out in his assumption that the American continent was partly peopled by Tartars.

On rocks high up the Essequibo, there are certain rude figures or hieroglyphics, which ought to be accurately copied for the purpose of comparison with those so rife in Mexico. The Carib language is considered the first great language on the east of the Andes, then the Arrawak and Wurrow. The Accaway is merely a dialect of the Caribisce, whilst the Arrawak and Wurrow are totally different.

As a specimen :—Fire, in Arrawak, is *ikehkee* ; in Wurrow, *ikoonooh* ; and in Caribisce and Accaway, *waatuh*. Water, in Arrawak, is *wunney-yaboo* ; in Wurrow, *ho* ; and in Caribisce and Accaway, *tooniah* and *toonah*. Earth, in Arrawak, is *ororoo* ; in Wurrow, *hotah* ; and in Caribisce and Accaway, *eetoh*.

This, then, is a sketch of the different tribes who inhabit British Guiana. At present they are of little or no value to the colony, except, like the Maroons of Jamaica, being a check upon the negroes; but with care they might be of great benefit to the province. No time ought to be lost in endeavouring to reclaim them, and to teach them settled and industrious habits, or they will quickly disappear from the face of the earth by European diseases, for which they have no cure, and the vicious habit they acquire of drinking spirits.

The great Chateaubriand lays down most judicious directions for the management of Indians; and from a little work entitled "Indian Notices," by Mr. Hilhouse, published in Stabroek seven years ago, valuable instruction may be derived by those who have the interest of these neglected wanderers at heart.

What have been the consequences to the Hollanders of neglecting their Indians in Surinam? Dangerous settlements of bush negroes, amounting now to seventy thousand souls, who continually plunder the plantations, and may one day drive the Dutch into the sea.

In British Guiana there are six Protectors of Indians, but in reality mere honorary appointments, and under these there are six Postholders and assistants on the different rivers. The Postholders receive £158 of salary per annum and a house, and their assistant £72. The duties of the Protectors are, to see that the Postholders do their duty and

fill their offices agreeably to instructions ; to endeavour to make peace between contending parties of Indians ; to transmit quarterly returns to the Lieutenant-Governor. The duties of Postholders are, to keep the posts in good order ; to attach the Indians to their posts ; to endeavour, on all occasions, to prevent misunderstanding and quarrelling between individuals or tribes ; to preserve peace among them ; to deter all persons, whether whites or free coloured, from passing the posts without permission of the Lieutenant-Governor or Protector of Indians ; and to give in, through their respective Protectors, to the Lieutenant-Governor a quarterly return of all occurrences at their post.

The Protectors have no salary, and are merchants and planters who live on the coast ; the Indians are therefore left to the tender mercies of the Postholders, who, removed from observation in the interior, report “ what seemeth good to them ” to the Protectors, who again only triennially visit the posts.

I took pains to get introduced to one of the Protectors, expecting to get from him a good deal of information regarding the Indian population, their condition, manners and customs, &c. ; but what was my surprise to find that he knew nothing whatever about them, and seemed to care as little !

Some of the Postholders are men of mongrel breed between the English and Dutch, are altogether unprincipled and worthless, shamefully neglecting or abusing the charge committed to them.

Their sole aim seemed to be to enrich themselves, or to find the means of living a debauched life by inducing the Indians to cut wood for them by presents of rum, thereby demoralizing the people they were intended to protect. "*Ex uno disce omnes*,"—one instance of their roguery will suffice :

After the declaration of independence by Columbia, three hundred Indians from the Spanish missions, refusing to place themselves under the republican government, came to the banks of the Pomeroon river and settled on the British territory. They were in a very civilized state, were well clothed and well acquainted with agriculture, and many mechanical arts, to the honour of the Jesuit padres who had instructed them. Altogether they were a valuable acquisition to the colony. A drunken and unprincipled Postholder on the Pomeroon, concealing from his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor the arrival of these people, immediately employed them in cutting troolees for his own benefit ; and Mr. Hyne a most respectable Roman Catholic clergyman, told me that he was the first to discover them to the Lieutenant-Governor, for a deputation from these Spanish Indians came to him in Stabroek, requesting that he would visit their settlement, which he did, married many of their young people and baptized about seventy children. From this excellent man I got many interesting particulars of the state in which he found these Indians.

Mr. Hilhouse's report on the soil and climate of

the interior of Guiana, or the region inhabited only by the Indians, is very favourable. "For," says he, "it is far more salubrious than that of the coast;" though nearer the line, its superior elevation lowers the temperature, and the thick shade of the forest keeps the surface of the earth cool.

I said that the number of deaths on the estates on the rivers and creeks was greater than those on the coast, but this meant only the flat banks of the rivers near the sea; for higher up, and beyond the influence of the tide, the rivers' banks are extremely healthy. There the drainage is perfect; no stagnant waters exist, nor is miasma generated by decayed vegetables exposed to the influence of the sun.

As forest tracts are always moist, so in the interior great quantities of rain fall; the forests attract the clouds required for their own support, and between the tropics abundant nourishment is required for vegetation; therefore it is recommended, in clearing a country for cultivation, that groups of trees be left to increase the fertility of the soil.

My informant stated, that it was his opinion, if the hand of cultivation reached the hills of the interior, and a few artificial improvements were added to the advantages of local situation, the climate of Guiana would be the most healthy and agreeable of any within the tropics, with fish, flesh, fowl, and vegetables in abundance, pure water, no fevers, and no musquitoes.

One therefore naturally supposes that this region

would be a favourable one for the occupation of British emigrants, and it really would be so, if the emigrants were properly directed. But first it would be necessary to act justly with regard to the Indians; to colonize them, to assemble them in communities, teach them industrious habits, and elevate their minds by moral and religious instruction.

Mr. Hilhouse recommends Bartika, at the confluence of the three rivers, as an eligible situation for a colony, and thinks it will succeed best if it is half European and half Indian. Thus the former would learn the appropriate habits of the climate, the moral character of the Indian would be improved, (supposing that the Europeans conducted themselves with propriety,) and no hostility or opposition would then be experienced on the part of the Indians.

The head of this colony should be well acquainted with the character of the Indians, be of sound principles and unspotted reputation; he should reside constantly at the colony, and report to the Lieutenant-Governor alone. No worthless characters should be allowed to approach the red man, no spirit drinking allowed, no debauching of their women, and no interference with their prejudices.

Of course the white colonists ought to have the immediate benefit of instruction with religion for its basis, without which it is highly pernicious. But with regard to the Indians, their morals ought first to be improved before they can be duly susceptible of religious impressions; industry and

sobriety ought first to be inculcated, and then let religion shed its benign influence over them—

“ Then let the desert sing ;
Where sprang the thorn, the twining vine shall spring,
And where unsightly and rank thistles grew,
Shall grow the myrtle and luxuriant yew.”

A military force, partly white and partly Indian, may be organized from the colonists, which as bush rangers, and preventing slave insurrection, and detecting runaway negroes, would be invaluable.

It is a singular fact, that the colonies of Guiana owed their origin to Indians. The Dutch came amongst them, induced some to labour and others to procure for them Indian slaves. The free Indians received a few European articles, which they prized, as cloth and ammunition. The Dutch gradually becoming richer by the export of their produce, purchased negro slaves, and dispensed with the services of the Indians. The coffee, indigo, cocoa and arnotto (dye), which were cultivated high up the river, are now succeeded by cotton and sugar on the sea coast.

At present, the agricultural labours of the Indians only occupy them two months in the year, but, with proper management, they might be induced to raise sufficient maize, cassava, and plantains to support them, without roving about for fish and game, as they do at present ; and though the savannahs of Columbia and of Brazil are occupied with immense herds of cattle, the savannahs of British Guiana are grazed only by the deer.

Those who are superficially acquainted with the Indians, complain of the drudgery that the women are subjected to : thus they see them *en route*, first the husband, with upright carriage, bearing only his light arms ; behind him, in single file, walk the women carrying the heavy burdens :—then again the women are seen weeding in the fields, drawing water, collecting fire-wood, and preparing the food ; whilst all this time the man may be lazily hanging his legs and arms out of his hammock ;—but then it must be considered that on a journey his hands ought to be free to guard against surprise ; that he clears the fields, builds the coorial and the logie, hunts and fishes—so that the division of labour is not unequal.

It is a very painful reflection, that although the colony annually pays the Protectors, for presents, provisions, Postholders' salaries, &c. about £3000, in order to induce the Indians to remain in British Guiana, yet the office of Postholder has been so shamefully abused, that the Indians are yearly and rapidly decreasing in numbers.

In the Coromantyne negro rebellion of 1793 and 1794, eight hundred Carib warriors took the field to suppress it. Scarcely fifty can now be found in Demerara ; nine-tenths of the Arrawaks which then existed, exist no more ; half the Accaways and half of the Wurrows have now disappeared. The Indians have rendered signal services to the colony, but neither have pains been taken to preserve them, nor has their welfare been at all promoted. No

charge of corrupt dealing can be brought against the Protectors, who are generally highly respectable gentlemen; but their indifference to the interests of the red men cannot be excused; and really the system which has existed in British Guiana for forty years, compared with that in Columbia, with respect to the Indians, makes one blush for one's country.

The reasons why the administration of Indian affairs ought immediately to be changed, are these important ones:—First, on the score of humanity; at present the Indians near the coast imitate the vices of the Europeans, and contract their diseases, and no arm is stretched forth to save them from the utter destruction, bodily and mental, which is about to overwhelm them.—Secondly, on the score of interest; if the colony is again attacked by a foreign foe, the negroes would probably rise in rebellion if there are no Indians to keep them in check; the regular militia will be obliged to succumb to the invader; the honour of the British arms will be tarnished, and the rich South American colonies lost. The change recommended to be made is simply this. One active, zealous, and responsible Superintendent of Indians, with an adequate salary, instead of six unpaid Protectors. Steady half-pay officers as Postholders; annual Indian fairs, and the formation of Indian communities.

To conclude, “our policy is simple, and the danger to be avoided is great.”

CHAPTER V.

Settlers on the coast.—Unacquainted with the interior of Guiana.—Pleasures of a Bush expedition.—Advice to Wanderers.—Expedition of Mr. Hilhouse and Mr. Tichmaker.—Sail up the Mazarooni.—Magnificent mountain ranges.—Ra-leigh's Peak.—Arrawak fathers.—The great falls of Cumarow.—A glorious scene.—How to spend the night in the bush.—A tale of the living and the dead.—Interesting collections.—The melancholy fate of the travellers Smith and Gullifer.—Left valuable papers.—Cannibalism on the Essequibo.—The enchanted pool.—The Rev. Mr. Hyne's visit to the Spanish Indians of Morocco.—Their civilized state.—Conduct of certain parties of pleasure condemned.—A warning.

Is it not strange and surprising, that although most of the rivers and creeks of the interior of British Guiana are unknown, hardly any one has attempted to explore them? The merchants and planters on the coast ridicule the idea of expeditions into the interior, attended as they are with risk, discomfort, and no profit. Yet, if one is willing to leave for a while the pursuits of wealth or idle pleasures, let him penetrate the wilds of Guiana, and he will be amply repaid for his trouble; he will there view the grandest productions of the torrid zone—the broad rivers abounding with undescribed fish; the vast forests tenanted with wild beasts, shunning the approach of man; and with

the most beautiful of the feathered tribes, appearing like blossoms among the leaves; the swamps nourishing in their gloomy recesses serpents of the largest size; and the rich green plain of the broad savannahs, perhaps diversified only here and there with a solitary tree. High excitement will attend the pilgrim, and no great danger, either from Indians or wild animals,—respect the prejudices of the former, and cautiously tread near the haunts of the latter:—*Prudens et audax*, Prudence with daring, is an excellent motto and maxim for a traveller.

If the dry season in October and November is selected, comparative comfort will attend the wanderer; he will then enjoy a clear sky, the rapids will be more easily passed, and the rivers flowing with gentler current than during the freshes in the rains; he will have a long morning twilight, and in the evening the moonlight and the refreshing breeze will delight him as he prepares for his repose under the serene canopy of heaven, listens to the hum and noise of the myriads of insects around his hammock, or watches the sparkling showers of the fire-flies among the foliage.

“ And nought of gloom he feels, or inward dread,
But joy-inspiring shades he sees before him spread !”

I was unable to ascend the rivers as far as I wished to do, from the great freshes in them. The season of the year was most unfavourable, and I was daily drenched with rain; yet I penetrated in

every direction as far as I could, and by practising a Spartan abstinence, shielding my head from the sun's influence, and taking care always to sleep dry, I suffered no injury on the score of health. I recommend a broad-brimmed leather hat, covered with white linen, a light waterman's jacket, short water-proof cloak, and leather leggings, for bush expeditions between the tropics. The arms,—a rifle, sword, dagger, and double-barrelled pistol.

Mr. Hilhouse, and a young and intelligent planter of the name of Tichmaker, availed themselves of the dry season of 1830, and had, to the distance of two hundred and fifty miles, a most interesting expedition up the Mazarooni river, by them explored for the first time. I now subjoin a short sketch of their proceedings.

At Stabroek the travellers hired a number of Arrawak Indians, and a large canoe, in which they placed tin boxes containing their clothes; presents of cloth, cutlery, and beads for the red men, and fowling-pieces to kill their food. From the Esse-qui-bo river they passed into the Mazarooni, which makes a considerable sweep to the north-east, and then returns, so as to form a large peninsula enclosing lofty mountains and considerable creeks. The isthmus of the peninsula is so narrow, that three days will suffice to cross it, so that thus the sweep may be avoided. The travellers, however, pursued the course of the river, passed the mouths of several creeks, and saw on the left, mountain ranges seemingly of white quartz, and several

thousand feet in height. Towering above the rest, was a noble peak on which rested a diadem of clouds: this they named Raleigh's Peak, for they were in Eldorado, the shining particles of mica in the quartz having been mistaken for precious ore—hence a region of gold. Afar off was also seen a magnificent waterfall, which like a thread of silver, fell over a face of rock apparently eleven hundred feet high!

It was remarked of the Arrawak men, women, and children, who accompanied the travellers, that the fathers evinced great fondness for their children, carefully wrapped them up in coarse blankets at night, sheltered them from the rain, and tended them as carefully as the mothers did. We read of the indifference of the American Indians to their offspring—that like the stony-hearted ostrich they leave them to nature; but it is not so true. They allow them to eat whatever they can pick up; thus they may be seen with a large piece of indigestible cocoa-nut in their hand, or munching green fruit; but the parents know not how pernicious this food may be;—and it often surprised me to see so many children survive such a system. But let us follow the expedition.

White sand-stone rocks on the rivers' banks, were succeeded by felspar, then granite and quartz seemed to form the highest ridges. On coming to the Cumarrow creek, the travellers were told by their Indians, that up it there were very fine falls; accordingly, they left the Mazarooni and

turned up the creek. No white man had ever been seen there before, except three Spanish padres, who twenty years before had lived at the mouth of the creek, and persuaded many Indians to accompany them to the missions on the Oronoco.

The banks of the Cumarow were, as usual, shaded with magnificent trees, and there were scattered settlements of Indians, in all, about one hundred and fifty people. The water shoaled as they proceeded; in some places it was only one foot, and then three; on these occasions the Indians jumped out of the coorial, and dragged it into deep water. The colour of the water was often very peculiar, being a deep chocolate, from the decomposed vegetable matter held in solution in it. At last they came to where the surface of the water was white, with streaks of foam, and rapids ran between high rocks.

They now left the coorial, and proceeded towards the rushing of mighty waters; they climbed up the steep face of a hill, holding on by the bushes, and found themselves suddenly near the top of a magnificent cascade. They crawled on their hands and knees to the edge of a cliff of perpendicular descent, and saw the fall, glorious with rainbows amongst the foam of its waters, plunging into an awful abyss, and surrounded by sublime scenery. Mountain ranges, four thousand feet in altitude, were before the enraptured spectators, and untrodden forests encompassed them. The thermometer at the top and bottom of the fall, indi-

cated in boiling water 206° and 208°; the height of the cataract was estimated at five hundred feet, the breadth at the top one hundred.

After remaining some time at the grand falls of Cumarrow, the rains set in before the travellers could penetrate any farther, and dysentery attacked Mr. Hilhouse. Accordingly they retraced their steps, and every night they landed and slept in their hammocks between trees. But they had omitted to take any covering for their hammocks; a painted sheet to form an awning would have effectually protected them; and when they neglected to make the Indians cut a few leaves and make a shed to shelter them, they were forced to sit on their tin boxes under an umbrella, back to back, and this for three nights.

One evening they heard a man howling in the woods; they landed, and found an Arrawak Indian swinging in a hammock between two dead bodies on each side of him, also in hammocks; he swung his hammock from side to side, and thus caused the dead also to swing, and all the while he uttered the most distressing cries. On enquiring what was the matter, he said that the corpses were those of his two brothers, who had just died from injuries they had received from an unfriendly tribe which had passed up the creek in the night; but no wounds were apparent on the bodies, and they were taken down and laid on the ground.

The surviving brother then cut thorny twigs, and beat the bodies all over, uttering at the same

time, "Heia, heia," as if he felt the pain of the flagellation; he then took the grease of a hog just killed, and anointed the mouths and faces of the dead, grunting all the while, when, seeing that it was impossible to reanimate the lifeless clay, he opened the eyes and beat the thorns into the eyeballs, and all over the face. It was a dreadful sight, but it evinced how deeply the poor Indian felt the loss of his brothers, and the rude means he took to restore animation. At last he was persuaded to bury them: a mat was thrown over them, the grave filled up, and strewed with leaves.

After a day of fish-shooting at a poisoned creek, the travellers returned to Stabroek with a carefully executed chart by Mr. Hilhouse, of the Mazaroony river, and many of the creeks that flow into it; also many specimens of minerals, birds, insects, &c. from the interesting district they had just explored.

Two years ago a Mr. Smith, a mercantile man from the Caraccas, was joined at Stabroek by a Lieutenant Gullifer, R.N.; they proceeded down the Pomeroon river, then up the Wycena creek, travelled across to the Coioony, sailed down it, and then went up the Essequibo to the Rio Negro, connecting the Amazons with the Oronoco. At Para, on the Rio Negro, Mr. Smith, from sitting so long cramped up in a coorial, got dropsy, and allowing himself to be tapped by an ignorant quack, he died after a fortnight's illness. Lieutenant Gullifer sailed down the Rio Negro to the Amazons, and remained at Para for some months, till he

heard from England. From domestic details which he received at Para, he fell into low spirits and proceeded to Trinidad, where one morning he was found suspended to a beam under the steeple of the Protestant church. His papers, and Mr. Smith's, consisting of journals of their travels, were sent to a brother of Lieutenant Gullifer on the Morocco coast of Essequibo. I went there and saw the papers, and was anxious to edit them, or obtain them for the Royal Geographical Society, but Mr. Gullifer said he must first consult with the relatives in England.

Among the other interesting details I found in their notes, I may mention the following: High up the Essequibo they fell in with a nation of Anthropophagi, of the Carib tribe. The chief received the travellers courteously, and placed before them fish with savoury sauce; on this being removed, two human hands were brought in, and a steak of human flesh. The travellers thought this might be part of a baboon of a new species; however, they declined the invitation to partake, saying, that in travelling they were not allowed to eat animal food. The chief picked the bones of the hands with excellent appetite, and asked them how they had relished the fish and the sauce; they replied that the fish was good, and the sauce still better. On which he answered, "Human flesh makes the best sauce for any food; these hands and the fish were dressed together. You see these Macoushi men, our slaves, we lately captured

these people in war, and their wives we eat from time to time." The travellers were horrified, but concealed the state of their feelings as well as they could ; and before they retired for the night, they observed that the Macoushi females were confined in a large logie, surrounded with a stockade of bamboo ; so that daily, the fathers, husbands, and brothers of these unfortunate women saw them brought out and knocked on the head, and devoured by these inhuman cannibals. Lieutenant Gullifer, who was then " in bad condition," got into his hammock and slept soundly ; but Mr. Smith, being " in good case," walked about all night, fearing that their landlord might take a fancy to a steak of white meat.

" For he could drink hot blood,
And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on."

They afterwards visited a cave in which there was an enchanted pool of water ; the Indians requested them not to bathe in this pool, for if they did, they would die before the year was out. They laughed at their brown monitors, bathed, and sure enough were both clods of the valley before the twelve months had expired.

A very intelligent and most worthy Catholic clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Hyne (before mentioned), paid a visit a short time ago to the Indians who had come from the Spanish Missions of Columbia, and settled in the British territory on the banks of the Pomeroon. I had the pleasure of making Mr.

Hyne's acquaintance, and got his report of the state in which he found these interesting people.

In 1830 there were from one hundred and fifty to two hundred families of these Indians scattered on the Pomeroon, and on the creeks which fall into it, and into the sea on the Morocco coast of Essequibo; and though their existence there had been carefully concealed from the British governor by a Dutch postholder receiving British pay, yet it appears that they had emigrated from the Oronoco several years back, under very peculiar circumstances. Being essentially royalists, they took an early and decided part in the revolutionary war which distracted their country. Every inducement which the love of liberty, licentiousness, or money, could suggest or inspire, was held out by the patriots as the price of their apostacy; but true to the interests of their sovereign, they struggled (till the last strong hold was abandoned by the European royalists) to uphold the declining fortunes of their master.

This devotedness brought down upon them a dreadful retaliation; their priests were massacred, their villages plundered and razed to the ground, and these forlorn beings, whose greatest crime was an attachment to the institutions which rescued them from barbarism, were driven from their comfortable homes, and the land they fertilized with the sweat of their brows, to seek a shelter amongst the forests of Guiana. One wide desolation has since overspread these Missions, and the Indians,

assembled together with so much trouble, are again wandering in the woods.

It was but natural to suppose, that, freed from every restraint, civil and ecclesiastical, they were much deteriorated in their moral and intellectual condition since their departure from the Oronoco. The temptations to idleness and profligacy which such a state of life holds out, and the corrupting influence of the erratic tribes with whom they were compelled to assort, are not easily withstood. They yielded to them in a certain degree, but though degenerated, it was easy to discover a degree of intelligence, and a refinement of feeling, which marked at once the early impress of civilization and religion. Happy at being tolerated within the pale of a more enlightened and settled Government, they were eager to evince their gratitude for the protection it afforded them; they were likewise most anxious, but unable of themselves, to transmit to their children those blessings which elevated them in the scale of beings under the excellent and liberal administration of Sir Benjamin D'Urban. These advantages, it is to be hoped, will be secured to them, and the colony will be amply repaid for the patronage extended to them, in the attachment and fidelity of a grateful people.

Mr. Hyne's visit to the Morocco Indians was at their own urgent request. In the beginning of 1830, they commissioned a white man to call on him, and inform him of their destitute condition,

deprived of the comforts of religion, and the advantages of civilized life. This person gave so much curious information concerning them, their manners and habits, that Mr. Hyne expressed a wish to see and confer with some of their head men ; and accordingly, within a few weeks after this interview, Mr. Hyne had the pleasure of conversing with their chief, Captain Guan Aguilar, and a few others, and was struck with the good sense and intelligence which characterized their discourse.

The captain read well in his own language, wrote, and was not deficient in what might be called general information. His knowledge of the system of Christianity and of morals, was as extensive and correct as is found among the generality of those who compose the lower orders of peasantry in civilized Europe. As a proof of his general knowledge, Mr. Hyne instanced what occurred on the occasion of his first visit to his house. The eye of the Indian happened to be arrested by some scriptural and historical pictures which were suspended in one of the apartments, and after adjusting his spectacles (which, as an inhabitant of the forest is described, it may not be uninteresting to mention were of gold), and surveying them, he instantly gave the history of what they represented.

This good old man then informed Mr. Hyne that all his compatriots were most desirous to see the padre, and intreated him to name a day that he would visit their settlement, to give them an opportunity once more of assisting at the rites of

their religion. They had likewise many children to be baptized ; and there were some young couples who were desirous to be joined in wedlock. With the consent of the Governor, St. John's day was named as the one on which Mr. Hyne would visit the Indians, which was a day of great festivity among them.

On the eve of the feast of St. John he reached their settlement among the dark woods of Pomeroon, and was received by them with many demonstrations of joy and affection. Muskets were fired as he approached ; and on his landing, men, women, and children flocked to kiss his hand in token of respect. It being night, the forest was illuminated with wax lights of their own manufacture. Considerable numbers had arrived from all quarters for the celebration of the festival, and they danced and enjoyed themselves with much sobriety and decorum till a late hour, and without indulging in any of that uproarious mirth so characteristic of the savage.

On the morning of the festival great preparations were made for the celebration of the divine mysteries ; a large logie was cleared out for the purpose, and tastefully decorated with flowers and green boughs, and in this rustic temple the service was performed to a most orderly and devout congregation. Seventy-five children were then baptized, all under the age of ten years. The appearance of these little innocents was quite attractive ; they approached the font attired in the prettiest manner, attended by their godfathers and godmothers ; the

girls robed in white, with necklaces of coral and silver, and their hair nicely arranged with combs tipped with gold. These children were catechised, and they were all well instructed in their prayers. Some couples were then joined in wedlock; and their appearance and demeanour also gave great satisfaction to the worthy *padré*.

During the three days that Mr. Hyne stayed at Morocco, a single case of inebriety did not fall under his observation, so that in the work of reforming these people there was a vice less to combat among them. They were generally decent in their manners, and their appearance was very prepossessing. The men were all well clad, in Spanish straw hats, trowsers, and a loose upper robe; and the females were also gracefully attired in flowing drapery, and their hair carefully arranged. In all the scattered settlements Mr. Hyne remarked a degree of comfort and cleanliness that it would be in vain to look for among other Indians; their houses were all neat and commodious, and their grounds tolerably well cultivated—sufficiently so perhaps for their wants. Coffee, sugar-cane, plantains, yams, cassava, maize, and a variety of vegetables were observed growing. They also raised great quantities of feathered stock. They expressed the juice from the cane by a simple machine, and from it made a liquor like spruce beer; if this were to be introduced among other Indians, they might be weaned of their liking for rum. They also caught

and cured fish, particularly the querriman, so much sought after in the colony.

At present these Spanish Indians are out of the sphere of usefulness to the colony, and if left to themselves must relapse into a state of barbarism. The colony would materially benefit if they were settled up the Demerara river; for instance, formed into one community, and drilled to act against negroes in case of revolt; their bravery is undoubted, and they were originally all trained in the Missions. Their highmindedness and conscious feeling of superiority, never suffer them to ally themselves with the negroes. A few thousand dollars might be advanced to enable them to build and fit up a church, school, and family houses; and their settlement should be so situated that other Indians should see them and profit by their example, but no European of bad caste should be allowed to approach them, and drunken Postholders should not be tolerated.

It is with pain I mention it, but a sense of duty compels me to state, that some parties who at various times have gone a short way up some of the rivers of Guiana "for pleasure," have behaved most imprudently, as far as their own safety was concerned, and in a manner which seriously wounded the feelings of the kind-hearted woodcutters and the inoffensive Indians. I have no doubt that several of those who conducted themselves in the way to which I allude, were led to believe, from the

reports of libertines, that the females up the rivers, belonging either to Creole woodcutters or red hunters, might be tampered with ; but they ought to have reflected that men have hearts and affections, whether they live in the sunshine of civilized society or in the shade of a forest, and it cannot be endured that those who dwell in the wilds, and are comparatively unprotected, should be liable to be abused by whoever choose to make free with what does not belong to them. I heard of certain individuals who gave so much offence at the Wyeena creek to a party of Indians, by endeavouring to seduce their women, of whom they are very jealous, that the hired followers of the whites were obliged to conceal their masters for three days in the bush from the vengeance of the justly-offended Accaways.

Surely if a person "takes the road" it is then (above all other seasons) his bounden duty to leave his sinful propensities behind him ; if he does not, he not only endangers his own safety, and commits a great moral offence, but also causes serious inconvenience to those who follow him. He who walks forth with pure intent, may spread his carpet in the chamber and dip his hand in the dish of the jealous Mussulman ; but he who allows his eyes to wander towards what is forbidden, may well dread the knife of the avenger and the beak of the vulture.

CHAPTER VI.

Descend the Essequibo.—Dangerous rocks.—Arrive at Plantation Meerzorg.—The House, Garden and Works described.—A negro holiday.—Musicians and Dancers.—Piccaninies.—Ladies of Quality.—Creole Dance.—The poor oppressed Slaves.—Insect serenade.—Ride round the estate.—A plantain thief.—Walks.—Canals.—Punts.—Cattle.—A Field-gang.—Book-keeper and Driver.—Studies for a Statuary.—Breakfast.—A Jaguar at the Hog-pen.—Dutch Coffins and Land-crabs.—The manufacture of Sugar.—Grinding.—Boiling.—Curing.—Animating Scene.—The Calabash Estate.—A sucking Thief.—Military Smugglers.—A Dinner party.—Fishing for Guanas.—A Buck party.—Sunday in Wakenaam.—Negro Congregation.—Critique on a Sermon.—Misstatements of the Abolitionists.—The Church establishment of the Colony.—Moravians the best Missionaries.—A candid Statement.

Let us now descend to the coast, and visit the coffee and sugar plantations, and see the actual condition of the negroes on the estates ; but as we drop down with the current, let us not forget our obeisance to the Old Man's Rock in the Essequibo, which a murdered Buckeen continually haunts, and at which it is dangerous to point the finger ; and let us avoid the water boiling near the dangerous Sisters, and particularly the current sweeping past the sharp edge of the Sail Rock.

Heavy squalls of wind and rain assailed us before we reached Wakenaam Island, and we got aground

off Fort Island ; but at last I found myself, after a most interesting excursion, under the care of Mr. Pearson, the hospitable manager of the Meerzorg plantation.

The house, commanding a view of the broad river and of the Atlantic, was two-storied ; built on brick pillars ; had a broad gallery round the first floor ; and the cool breeze from Quakeraba played through the airy apartments. The garden which surrounded it was in excellent order, which is not always the case in Guiana, for vegetation is so rapid, and there is such a demand for field labourers, that seldom can hands be spared from the raising of sugar or coffee, to cultivate fruits and flowers. Here, however, I saw neat walks, shaded by the broad-leaved vine, ornamental trees, and shrubs in great variety, as the bread fruit tree, the tall cocoa nut, the majestic palmetto royal, the grenadillo, water lemon, the star-apple, fig, mango, and above all the broad leaves shading the golden bunches of the banana, waved gracefully round the pleasant dwelling.

“ The sight was pleased,
The scent regaled, each odoriferous leaf,
Each op'ning blossom, freely breathed abroad
Its gratitude, and charmed us with its sweets.”

The “ works ” were visited, where I saw the steam-engine for crushing the canes ; the five cauldrons for boiling the juice ; the coolers in which it congeals and becomes sugar ; the curing-house, where hogsheads on end allowed the molasses to drain

from them ; the still-house, where from the skimming of the cauldrons the rum is prepared ; the trash-house, where under cover is kept the dry and pressed canes to be used as fuel ; the hospital, where every care and attention was paid to the sick negroes ; and the negro-houses in two rows, with gardens round them, in which were pigs, poultry, and culinary vegetables.

It was a holiday, and Quashee and Quasheba were lounging about in their gala dresses, and waiting impatiently for evening, to commence their festivities in the "Great House." The men were dressed in white vests and trowsers, and cloth jackets ; and the women in printed gowns, with straw hats or handkerchiefs on their heads. Every where as we passed through the different groups in the garden, the white teeth were displayed in a smile, and "How de massa ? ready for dance massa !" was heard. The piccaninnies, black and mischievous as monkeys, were "scurrying" about, running between their parents' legs, laughing loud, and tumbling one another head over heels on the grass.

At last a drum is heard in the gallery, and the negroes take possession of the house ; two or three musicians then seat themselves in chairs, and with fiddle, tambourine, and drum, strike up some lively jigs, at the same time thumping the floor vigorously with their heels. Every one is alive ; short cries of mirth are uttered by the men as they hand out their sable partners ; and they lead one another

up and down the lane of the country dance, with as much enjoyment as I have ever witnessed at a Highland wedding.

The little black urchins, boys and girls, are not idle round the room, whilst their parents are "tripping it" in the centre, but copying their elders, they "cut and shuffle" at a great rate; the mothers, with children at their breasts, alone quietly enjoy the scene. A worthless fellow who rushed in his chemise into the room, and attempted to join the well-dressed figurantes, was instantly expelled. Santa (sweet punch) and cakes, were handed round from time to time. Mulatta ladies looked in at the windows at the mirthful scene, but declined to join the negroes; and a few overseers and book-keepers "whispered soft nonsense" in their ears.

Outside the house, in the moonlight, a musician seated himself with his drum on the grass, and commenced singing an African air, when a circle of men and women, linked hand in hand, danced round him with rattling seeds on their legs, and joined in the chorus.

Oh! how I wished that some of the kind ladies of Peckham could have contemplated for five minutes this scene of mirth! could have beheld what they are pleased to call "the naked, starved, and oppressed negroes," well clothed, plump, and full of glee: instead of shrieks of misery, could have heard shouts of laughter: and instead of the clang of the whip, could have heard the lively music of

the fiddles, and the gladsome songs of the creole dancers. Surely, then, their feeling hearts would prompt them to look for more distressed objects nearer home on which to exercise their benevolence, would induce them to leave emancipation to be wrought out by slow and rational means, and not cruelly insist, that since the planters have had for so long a time the use of their slaves, they should now give them liberty,—forgetting that to the suddenly emancipated slave this boon immediately opens the door to licentiousness and misery. “Vide ut supra,” see the preceding statement, and be convinced of your error.

But at the midnight hour let us dismiss the dancers to their neat cottages, to sleep off their fatigue, and to be ready to take the field on the morrow, though at a later hour than usual. We throw ourselves on our couch, and draw round us the mosquito gauze, and hear the tiny tormentors ply their busy wings round us, heedless of their vain efforts to feast on our blood. The hum of other insects, the harsh notes of the razor grinder, the shrill chirping of crickets, and the croaking of the bull frogs outside the house, after a time, lull us to rest; dreamless we pass the night. At early dawn Quambo appears in the room, and skilfully introducing under the gauze a cup of exhilarating coffee, at Shell Blow we spring vigorous and refreshed from our lair.

Mounting a horse, and receiving from a black groom a palm leaf to keep off the flies, I proceeded

to ride round the estate with the manager. We had gone but a little way when the negro watchman over the plantain walks, with a cutlass in his hand, advanced to us, dragging along with him a roguish-looking and meagre varlet, who he said had been detected stealing bunches of the favourite food ; the culprit made a great outcry, loudly protesting his innocence,—“ I neber do that ; him tell damn lie.” But as he had been caught in the fact, and not only that but a quantity of stolen plantains found in his house, he was forthwith condemned to the stocks, amidst the laughter of the women who flocked round us.

We rode down the centre walk of the estate, a broad road bordered by canals, from which others proceeded at right angles through fields waving with the beautiful cane plant, under the influence of the cool morning breeze. I observed in the canals the flat-bottomed punts, in which the canes were conveyed to the mill ; and the cattle belonging to the estate grazing on the rich grass of the banks, under the care of a young negro. Palm trees bordered the road for some distance, and then we came to a gang of athletic negroes at work with the hoe, under the eye of a white book-keeper, in straw hat and cotton dress ; he held in his hand a board containing a register of names, and certain little pegs to mark off the tasks performed, which were frequently completed at three in the afternoon. A black driver stood beside the line of negroes, bearing in his hand a small cane, the badge of

office. The whole gang worked vigorously, and were employed clearing a cane plot, that is, hoeing up the weeds ; all seemed in high spirits, and occasionally they burst out into a wild chorus.

A few women now joined the gang, advancing along the walk with calabashes of plantains and salt fish on their heads, which having deposited by the side of the fields, they also commenced their labour with the hoe. Their petticoats were tucked up to their knees, by a handkerchief tied round the loins ; they thus made a kind of kilt of it, by which they were not impeded in their work. The men had generally stripped off their shirts, and worked in their trowsers, and some of the busts of these labourers would have furnished models for the statuary ; the deep chest, the broad shoulders, and muscles of the arm fully developed, formed a perfect picture of manly beauty and strength.

At a signal from the book-keeper the negroes left off work and went to eat their breakfast ; some partook of pepper-pot, and others contented themselves with plantains and salt fish. The book-keeper, joined by two others, returned to the house, where they sat down to fish, meat, and coffee, and, though there was bread on the table, yet the nutritive plantain was preferred.

We continued our ride, thermometer in the shade at 80°, at nine A.M. and passed the hog-pen in an uncleared part of the estate. The negro keeper, an old African, dried and withered and unlike the superior race of creole negroes or those born in the

colony, reported that a jaguar, or leopard, had swum over from the main to Wakenaam; had visited the pen the night before, and carried off a hog. The robber must have been of formidable size, for the print of his foot was as large as a plate. The manager warned the man to keep a better look out in future, and mind his watch-fire.

Further on, after crossing some wooden bridges, we turned into another "walk," and found, on either side, the forest recently cleared or the trees cut down, the stumps remaining, and plantains as a first crop to prepare the rich soil for canes. We returned home under the shade of fruit trees, and examined the front dike which prevented the encroachments of the sea; but a recent flood in the Essequibo had swept over it and exposed a row of coffins of the old Dutch residents, made without a bend, like sea chests, in which were seen the bones of the dead clean picked by the voracious land-crabs, which ran out and in of their holes, and abounded in the moist soil. They were not unlike the common sea crab, moved sideways, and were of all sizes, from a man's hand to a nutshell.

I ate a light breakfast, and then went to a neighbouring estate, to see the operation of grinding the canes and boiling the juice; the piccaninny, or children's gang, under the charge of a matron, carried on their heads the canes to the upright cylinders revolving by steam, and an old negro placed the canes in order. The juice was quickly

expressed by the revolving cylinders, and conveyed into a cistern; from thence it was emptied into the first large copper, or clarifier, in the boiling-house; there the juice was skimmed and tempered with lime, to give it substance, and afterwards ladled into four other boilers, from whence it was transferred to the square and shallow coolers, and finally into hogsheads in the curing-house.

I was amused with the shouts of the boiler-men to the firemen outside, as they handled their large ladles to skim the bubbling juice, diffusing through the building a grateful steam. “*Mo fyer*” (more fire) was continually demanded in stentorian voice, accompanied by a joke and hearty laugh. All seemed on the *qui vive*, and the noise of the engines was mingled with the animating cries of the people, who were all following their vocations in excellent humour.

Negroes, if not strictly looked after, are very prone to steal sugar and rum, which they carry away from the works in calabashes. Hence the saying of “the calabash estate” being always the most productive in the colonies, as it is conducted at no expense. The sugar is commonly stolen by the negroes employed in emptying the coolers, or abstracted from the hogsheads on board the schooners; and the rum is obtained before being shipped in the following singular manner:—An overseer told me that he had frequently missed rum from a cask which stood near a window in a

room which was locked up ; he could not account for the manner in which the liquor disappeared ; he determined to keep watch all night, and from time to time walked round the house ; at last, on suddenly turning the corner of the building, he saw a negro with a long pipe in his mouth, made from the hollow foot stalks of the papaw tree, introduced between the blinds of the window, through which he sucked the rum, and spat it out into a calabash on the ground beside him. This he intended to dispose of at the grog-shops in the town, which are principally supplied from stolen produce.

Soldiers in the colonies, when prevented from introducing spirits into their barracks, have sometimes eluded detection by dipping their flannel vests into rum, passing the sentry, and wringing them out at their leisure. The negro mode of stealing rum was equally refined with the soldiers' mode of smuggling it.

In the afternoon I sat down to an excellent dinner with a party of hospitable managers from the neighbouring estates, who generally took a glass of wine and bitters, and some of them spirits, in the Russian way, to sharpen the appetite before the meal. We had excellent crab-soup, fish, turtle, tortoise, lamb, turkey, and ham ; patisserie followed, and then a dessert of pines, shaddocks, melons, water lemons, and Agovado pears, or the vegetable marrow. The fluids were seltzer water, malt liquor, and excellent hock and madeira. After two hours occupied in eating and drinking, the

party adjourned to the gallery, to smoke segars and enjoy the cool sea breeze, or doctor.

“ It was the hour to musing sweet,
When sun and sea in glory meet.”

Whilst we sat thus in luxurious enjoyment, half a dozen negroes, who had been allowed a holiday, returned from the forest with a number of guanas, or lizards, from two to three feet in length, with a serrated ridge on the back. These poor animals had their forelegs tied over their backs, reminding one of Waterton and the cayman. They make excellent pepper-pot, and their eggs are delicious. The negroes had caught them on the trees with a long stick and hair noose at the end of it. They whistle, fix their eye upon them, and approach them cautiously; the guana is fascinated, allows itself to be tickled with the end of the stick, the noose is slipped over the neck, and it is thus dexterously fished from the trees. An Arrawak and his two wives then paddled their canoe up a creek to the front of the house, and commenced bartering their bows and arrows and letter wood; they said that, since leaving their logie, they had slept on a few leaves at the bottom of the canoe.

Next day was Sunday, and I rode seven miles to hear a Presbyterian clergyman, whom the planters of Wakenaam had particularly requested to be sent to them from Scotland for their own benefit and that of their negroes; but he had grievously disappointed them: and though I heard many complaints of him, yet I was determined to judge for

myself. On arriving at the house of prayer, I found it to be a large open shed, with a small pulpit and desk in the centre, and rows of forms for the congregation, as usual, principally composed of women, who were remarkably neat and clean in their persons and dress. I felt deeply the peculiarity of my situation, sitting in the midst of these sable worshippers of a Deity in whose eyes the adoration of a pure heart, whether it beats beneath an alabaster or ebon skin, is equally acceptable.

The discourse was delivered in an impressive manner, and the minister took pains to explain to the negroes, as clearly as he could, though not in the language to which they are most accustomed, the Creole Dutch, the doctrines he was desirous of inculcating; but he seemed to neglect the precepts of the apostle James, and insisted on faith alone; forgetting that "as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without (good) works is dead also." Religion and morality ought to be inseparable.

I particularly remarked that this clergyman took no pains whatever to teach subordination to superiors—to show the duties of servants to masters, or that their interests were the same; and he was very reprehensible in altogether omitting to pray either for the King, the Governor of the Colony, or any in authority. He appeared to me to be a sincere Christian, but undoubtedly lacked judgment. He had quarrelled with all the planters who entertained mistresses; and had also given great offence to the negroes for refusing to baptize any of their chil-

dren born out of wedlock. How can he, or any other preacher of the Gospel, expect to do good among negroes, unless with unprejudiced mind he makes some allowance for colonial habits, and endeavours to conciliate the proprietors of slaves ?

It was gravely stated a short time ago by one of the most violent of the abolitionists of slavery, that if he had seen any disposition on the part of the colonists to prepare the slaves by religious instruction for emancipation, it would have given him great joy ; but that the policy of the whole of the Colonial Assemblies was to reject religious instruction. “ Let the Commons recall one name to their recollection,” said he. “ Let them remember Mr. Smith of Demerara. When the colonial authorities had persecuted that martyr to death, what did they do ? They banished the missionaries from that colony, and passed a law to prevent their admission in future ; and they have constantly endeavoured to put down schools, to shut up meeting-houses, and to abolish instruction altogether.”

Now what are the facts.—Mr. Smith was tried before a court martial of thirteen military officers, altogether unconnected with the colony ; they found him guilty of exciting the slaves to insurrection, and their sentence was confirmed by the King.—Mr. Smith died before the sentence was published. Never has a missionary been banished from Demerara, nor has any law been proposed or passed to prevent the admission of missionaries into the colony ; on the contrary, they have always been per-

mitted to exercise their sacred functions uninterruptedly, and there are at present at least ten resident in the colony; in which, besides the missionaries and their schools, there are eight clergymen of the established church, five Scotch ministers, two Roman Catholic priests, and twelve catechists, all paid by a colony with a population of three thousand whites.

A new chapel has just been erected in Stabroek; the stipends of the clergy and catechists amount to 100,000 florins annually, and 30,000*l.* have lately been expended in building and repairing churches and parsonages; besides, many planters have private schools on their own estates. In answer, then, to the above assertion, that “attempts are made to put down schools and abolish instruction,” as we say in the East—What can I say more?

I have the highest respect for Moravians. Their system of instruction is most judicious; they teach mechanical arts, and at the same time enlighten the understanding; thus gradually preparing the negro by slow but sure means to take care of himself, when eventually emancipated. Cowper beautifully says of the Moravians,

“Fir’d with a zeal peculiar, they defy
The rage and rigour of a polar sky;
And plant successfully sweet Sharon’s rose,
On burning plains, and in eternal snows.”

I cannot trust myself to speak of certain other sects, but merely say that their system is quite the reverse of the Moravians, who ought everywhere

to be encouraged ; whereas the others, with their " lip service," will find plenty of employment among the fanatics and ultra religionists at home, without visiting the colonies.

I am aware that this is a very delicate subject to meddle with, and I lay myself open to censure for noticing it at all ; however, I cannot help stating my sentiments, and to prevent mistakes, conclude this chapter in the words of a popular writer.

" I hate all humbug, and would eschew that cant and fanaticism which are at present tainting extensive portions of society, as sincerely as I venerate and wish to cultivate a spirit of sober, manly, and rational piety."

CHAPTER VII.

The important question of Abolition of Slavery.—Impartial Witnesses ought to be heard.—Colonies ought not to be sacrificed.—Slavery in the abstract cannot be defended.—Ruinous Consequences of sudden Emancipation.—St. Domingo.—Character of a Functionary there.—Humane enactments of the British Government.—Protectors of Slaves and their Assistants.—Their Duties.—Sunday Markets prohibited.—Also servile labour on that day.—Men, Women, and Children, how punished.—Religious Instruction and Medical Attendance.—Marriages of Slaves.—May acquire property.—Relatives not to be separated.—Manumission.—Slaves may purchase their Freedom.—Evidence of Slaves to be taken.—The food and maintenance of the Slaves.—Supported by an allowance of provisions or an allotment of land.—Hours of Labour.—Slaves' clothing.—How lodged.—Planters plead their inability to comply with all the Legislative Enactments.—Slavery in the East.—A cruel Punishment.—Treatment of Slaves in Surinam — Incredible.—Fresh Importations of Slaves.—Community of Lepers.—Comparative Slavery.—Brazilian Slaves.—A Slave Ship.—A Slave Market.—Some Slaves more degraded than beasts of burden.—French Slaves.—British Planters cannot compete with Foreigners if the present great Trade in Slaves is not suppressed.

THE more I think on the important question of the abolition of slavery, the more I am convinced that certain theorists in England take a wrong view of the case. Impartial witnesses are not listened to; and no credit is given to the British West India proprietors for all they have done, and are willing

to do, to ameliorate the condition of the negroes. Besides, no lover of his country would wish to see a portion, and a most important portion, of her possessions sacrificed to an idle clamour; and if he is actuated by a true spirit of patriotism, he will run the risk of obloquy and reproach, and stand forth fearlessly, and state what he knows, from personal observation, and "information collected on the spot," to be facts, and for the truth of which he pledges his honour.

No one with the slightest spark of fellow-feeling for his species, can be an advocate for slavery in the abstract; "it is always a bitter draught, disguise it as we will," and God grant that the day may not be far distant, when it will be altogether abolished and unknown in European settlements, or in those of their descendants. Still, since the evil exists, and was formerly encouraged by every Government, and since immediate emancipation of negroes, altogether unprepared for the blessings of freedom, would ruin their proprietors, (for without slaves their lands would be valueless, plough husbandry not yet having been extensively introduced,) and since it must be evident to every one who knows what negroes are, that to please the Anti-slavery Society, and grant immediate emancipation, *would not contribute to the happiness of the negro*; for idleness, crime, and punishment would rapidly succeed each other; it becomes the humane and philanthropic to inquire how can *eventual* emancipation be brought about without disaster and ruin to those

who are at present interested in West India property, and with advantage to the slave.

Let this be written on the palms of the hands of the abolitionists. "The slave question must be approached with a vast fund of information, and must be discussed with consummate prudence."

What was the consequence of the sudden emancipation of the slaves in the valuable Island of St. Domingo during the French revolution? The massacre of hundreds of the whites; the expulsion of the remainder; the loss of the colony, and ruin to the Bourdeaux merchants. What is the state of society in the free republic of Hayti at this moment? I answer by a short anecdote. A British man of war anchored off Port au Prince, and was shortly afterwards boarded by the black captain of the Port, in cocked hat, gold epaulettes, and side arms. He was taken down to the cabin, and shown every attention; and in return he asked the English captain to accompany him on shore; the invitation was declined, as it was intended to get under weigh early next morning. The captain of the Port then returned on shore. After night-fall it came on to blow, and the sea "got up;" the ship was hailed from a canoe alongside, half full of water; in it there was the (speculating) captain of the Port, naked to his drawers, and two female companions. "What can I say more?"

I greatly admire the enactments of the British Government for improving the condition of the

slaves in the crown colonies, British Guiana, Trinidad, St. Lucie, the Cape, and the Mauritius. I shall now give a short analysis of them.

A protector of slaves is appointed for each of the crown colonies with an adequate salary; he is obliged to have an office, and to attend regularly at that office. If the protector becomes an owner or a manager of slaves, he immediately forfeits his appointment; though, if unable to obtain free servants, he may hire slaves for *domestic purposes*. Protectors may enter on the estates, and into negroes' houses, to communicate with the slaves, and a penalty is imposed on those who oppose the protector in the discharge of his duties (this last ought perhaps to be amended).

Assistant protectors are appointed by the Governors for different districts. If a slave is brought to trial for a capital or transportable offence, the protector or an assistant is to attend in court on behalf of the slave. Again, on receiving notice of an injury done to a slave, the protector or assistant is immediately to inquire into the case, and if necessary, to sue or prosecute the wrong doer.

Sunday markets are entirely prohibited, and the public sale of goods on Sunday, except medicines and some perishable articles, after the hours of Divine service. The Governors appoint a market day in each week.

All servile labour is prohibited on Sunday, and those working their slaves on that day are subject

to a fine of from one to three pounds for each slave so employed : this of course does not apply to domestic servants.

The whip is not to be carried in the field as a stimulus to labour, nor as an emblem of authority, nor used, except for the punishment of a fault previously committed ; six hours must elapse between an offence and the punishment. Females are not to be punished by whipping ; and male slaves are not to receive more than fifteen lashes for one offence (thirty-nine and then twenty-five used to be the number), nor any whipping so long as scars remain on the body, nor unless one free witness, or six slaves be present. Judicial punishments form an exception to this rule.

Female children may be lightly punished by whipping ; and female adults by confinement in the stocks, the tread-mill, or imprisonment.

Managers of estates are to keep a record of all punishments inflicted on plantation slaves, and submit it half-yearly to the protector for inspection ; and on omitting to make the proper entries, heavy penalties are to be inflicted. Slaves are authorized to attend divine worship, and licensed ministers only are to officiate. A medical attendant, as heretofore, is to be supplied for the slaves, who is to keep a journal.

Slaves are declared competent to marry, and receive a licence from the protector on producing the owner's consent ; or if the owner dissents, the protector is to inquire into the case, and see justice

done the parties. Registers are to be kept of the marriages of the slaves.

Slaves may acquire property to any amount, and bring and defend actions for it; they are however not to be proprietors of boats, or to possess arms and ammunition, nor to be proprietors of slaves. Slaves are not to be taken in execution in satisfaction of debts contracted by themselves.

Husbands and wives, parents and children, are not to be separated under legal process, and separation of families is not to take place on the death of their owners intestate; neither can they be separated by conveyance, contract, or will. Slave children above the age of sixteen may be separated from their parents, and if families signify to the protector their willingness to be separated.

All fees of office and duties on manumission are abolished; all persons may manumit slaves belonging to them with the concurrence of all the joint owners. If a slave is manumitted gratuitously, bond must be given for his maintenance if he be less than six or more than fifty years old, or in a state of disease, or else the estate of a testator becomes liable.

With the concurrence of the protector, slaves may contract with their owners for the purchase of their freedom, and if the owner be unwilling, slaves may effect the purchase by compulsory process. Appraisers or umpires are to make the valuation. However, the judge may stay proceeding if it is found that the money to be paid has

been raised by donation *inter vivos*, and if the slave has committed any robbery within five years.

By the produce of their gardens, and by the sale of their pigs and poultry, many slaves have accumulated in a few years a sum for the purchase of their freedom; but after self-emancipation they never have been known to remain on estates as free labourers,—they all flock to the towns and keep grog or huckster shops.

The evidence of slaves is to be admitted; and slaves are forfeited on conviction of the owners for cruelty, but are punished when making calumnious accusations.

The rules to be followed with regard to the food and maintenance of the slaves are these:—every owner or manager of slaves is to intimate to the protector, or to an assistant, in the first week of January, whether he intends to maintain his slaves by the cultivation of ground to be to them appropriated for that purpose, or by an allowance of provisions; which intimation is however revocable.

The quantity of provisions to be supplied is as follows:—every slave above the age of ten years shall receive in each week not less than twenty-one pints of wheat-flour, or India or Guinea corn-flour, of good average merchantable quality, or fifty-six full-grown plantains, or fifty-six pounds of cocoas or yams; and also seven herrings or shads, or other salt provisions equal thereto. Children under ten years of age receive half of this allowance (which by the way is much more than a slave can consume).

Those who propose to maintain their slaves by an appropriation of land, are to allot to those above fifteen years of age half an acre of good land within two miles of the residence of the slaves; a quarter of an acre is allotted for children under fifteen, to be cultivated by the parents or friends. Seeds and implements of husbandry are to be supplied to the slaves; and forty days of twenty-four hours each are to be allowed for cultivating the lots.

The labour of slaves is limited from six in the morning to six in the evening, deducting three hours for their meals; but the young, the aged, and pregnant women, only to labour six hours in the twenty-four, and no slaves whatever are to labour more than nine hours in the twenty-four, whether employed in sugar boiling or otherwise.

The clothing required for slaves is to be as follows:—once a year there is to be delivered to every male slave above fifteen years of age, one hat of chip, straw, or felt, one cloth jacket, two cotton check-shirts, one pair of Osnaburgh trowsers, one blanket, two pairs of shoes, one knife and one razor; (the shoes and razor might be dispensed with—negroes dislike shoes and have no beards.) To every female slave of the age of thirteen and upwards, one chip or straw-hat, two gowns or wrappers, two cotton check-shifts, two Osnaburgh petticoats, two pairs of shoes, one blanket and one pair of scissors. Half of the above to children; and to each family, one saucepan, one kettle, pot,

or cauldron, for the cooking of provisions. Every slave is to be provided with a wooden or iron bedstead, so as to be elevated when asleep at least a foot above the ground ; and their houses are to be comfortable, and a separate one for each family.

Such is the substance of the late orders in council, addressed in a spirit of benevolence to the crown colonies, and which are also recommended to the colonies with legislative assemblies, as Jamaica, Barbadoes, &c. ; and the only plea the planters can urge for non-compliance with them is poverty—inability, from their reduced means, to furnish the requisite food and clothing ; and they earnestly pray for a reduction of the four and a half per cent. duty on their produce.

If the abolitionists of negro slavery really wish to improve the condition of the negroes, let them endeavour to improve the condition of their proprietors ; and let us hear no more of that monstrous doctrine, “ If the planters are depressed, the better will be the situation of the slaves.”

Let us now take a glance at slavery in other countries, and first let us make an exposé of an Oriental punishment which I have often been obliged most reluctantly to superintend. In the East Indies, if a person is unable to pay his debts to another, the debtor becomes the slave of the creditor until the amount is paid off. Now, in the regiments of cavalry, there is a grass-cutter to collect forage for each horse ; these are under a head man, called on the Madras esta-

blishment a choudry ; the grass-cutters are of both sexes, but principally women, and are often slaves of the choudry. When the bundles of grass are paraded in the troop-lines of an evening, the choudry measures them with a stick, to see that they are of the regulated height, length, and thickness ; if any are deficient, the grass-cutters who brought them, whether male or female, old or young, are ordered to the front, and the choudry taking a Russian knout from his shoulders, or a short stick with a very long and heavy lash, inflicts with it such a flagellation, under the superintendence of an officer, that, compared with it, the fifteen lashes that negroes receive with a cat or cow skin are nothing. Talk of the severity of West Indian punishments after this !

Whoever has perused Stedman's Narrative, descriptive of Dutch Guiana fifty years ago, has had his indignation excited and his feelings agonized at the recital of the abominable cruelties practised by the Hollanders of those days on the bodies of their helpless slaves ; and it will hardly be believed that many of the same atrocities are practised at this moment in Surinam. I derive my information from a most respectable gentleman of undoubted veracity who recently visited that colony ; and he stated to me as follows :—

During the summer of 1830 the Governor of Surinam issued a proclamation, similar to those that have been promulgated from time to time, enjoining that no negro should smoke, or sing, or whistle in the

streets of Paramaribo ; that on approaching a white man within five yards the negro must uncover his head ; that no negress is permitted to wear clothes above the waist, the breasts are to be exposed, and a petticoat from the waist to the knee is the only covering allowed. There are a few of our countrymen settled in Surinam, and even at their tables my informant said he was shocked to see the negroes in attendance with what ought to be sacred and concealed, exposed—their bosoms. This is most disgraceful.

“ Oh most degrading of all ills that wait
 On many a mourner in his best estate !
 All other sorrows Virtue may endure
 But Slavery. Virtue dreads it as her grave ;
 Patience itself is meanness in a slave.”

The manner in which men and women are punished with the cart-whip is stated to be thus :— Both sexes are stripped entirely naked, the wrists and ankles are firmly tied together with cords ; the victims, thus “ huddled up,” are laid on the ground on their right sides ; a stake passing between their legs and arms, and driven into the ground, effectually pins them to the earth. They are flogged on one buttock till it is quite raw, and then they are turned over and unmercifully chastised on the other, by black drivers, under the eye of a Dutch overseer quietly smoking his pipe !

After one hundred and fifty or two hundred lashes are inflicted, the sufferers are lifted up, as they are unable to rise or stand alone, and it is frequently a month before they are sufficiently well

to resume their work. Any one sending a negro to the jail may have one hundred and fifty lashes inflicted by the executioner for one dollar, and so on, paying in proportion to the number of lashes required.

In Dutch Guiana it is well known that slaves are continually imported from the coast of Africa, and therefore the price of an able-bodied field slave is only 40*l.*; whereas in British Guiana, into which every one conversant with the slave question knows that none have been introduced since 1807, when the negroes on an estate are sold, a field negro brings 250*l.* at least. At Surinam, his Britannic Majesty's commissioners for the adjudication of captured slaves, not having the faculty of ubiquity, cannot effectually prevent the importation of slaves, and particularly if the Dutch authorities lend an inattentive ear to their remonstrances. But slavers may land their living cargoes on any part of the coast of Surinam, without even the authorities knowing it.

There is only one doctor with a regular diploma in the whole of the extensive colony of Surinam; ignorant negro doctors are all the poor slaves have. The mortality is dreadful, but the supply abundant. The camps of runaway negroes, high up the Surinam river, which the Dutch made several ineffectual effort last century to surprise and disperse, now consist of sixty or seventy thousand souls, who have entered into a sort of treaty with their late masters, receive presents from them, but they still

occasionally plunder the plantations. Last of all, there is a community of seven thousand lepers, far in the woods of Surinam—men, women and children, cast off from all attendance, all comforts ; a catholic priest alone volunteered to administer spiritual consolation to them and live near them.

Such, I learned, is the treatment of slaves among the Dutch ; and though I was requested by some to omit these details, yet I have ventured to give them publicity, in the hope that by showing the condition of negroes under English and other masters in the New World, I may, by means of “ comparative slavery,” prove that the greatest injustice has been done our colonists. The British slave laws are most humane, and the colonists endeavour to obey them ; whereas cruelty and injustice prevail under other masters, since other governments, except the American, still connive at the importation of slaves. At the same time let it be borne in mind, that, so far from all Dutch masters using their slaves cruelly, I knew of several in Guiana who were most indulgent to their negroes, fed and clothed them properly, and tenderly watched them in sickness, living amongst them like parents among their children, and entering into all their feelings and sympathising in their joys and in their griefs. I have no cause to dislike Dutchmen ; on the contrary, I have several personal friends of that nation whom I highly esteem, and it is really with great reluctance that I give the above details ; but since I have professed an earnest desire to serve the British

colonists, a sketch of "comparative slavery" is one of the means I have adopted to do so.

Since we have noticed Dutch slaves, let us also observe for a few moments the condition of Portuguese slaves in Brazil. In 1830 the slave trade was carried on with such activity between the coasts of Africa and Brazil, that vessels were fitted out at Rio Janeiro to carry one thousand slaves; one of these was captured by a British cruiser.

The slave merchants of Rio Janeiro import their negroes from Cabinda and Benguela; they negotiate with the chiefs of these countries, who seize their own people and barter them for European goods. The negroes are then branded on the back or on the forehead, and often, without a rag to cover them, are packed closely in slave ships, occupying a confined space over the hold; they have only sitting room, and spreading their legs they sit in rows one behind the other, between each other's legs. Two large hatches give air to the slaves' room. They are brought on deck in gangs to walk about,—“and,” said the mate of a slaver to me, “we occasionally compel them to dance to keep them in health. A strong bulkhead separates them from the poop, on which are a brace of guns loaded with grape, and pointing forwards; double sentries with lighted matches are stationed beside these guns, and every evening the shot is drawn and the guns fired off, to show the negroes that we are prepared for them if they attempt to mutiny.”

“What wish can prosper, or what prayer
For merchants rich in cargoes of despair,
Who drive a loathsome traffic, gauge, and span,
And buy the muscles and the bones of man?”

Arrived at Rio, they are quartered in large sheds near the sea, and are fed on maize flour eaten out of gourds. Those desirous of purchasing slaves repair to the market called Vallongo, where the negroes are drawn up, quite naked, for inspection. They are then compelled to show their teeth, to walk, run, and strike out their legs and arms, to ascertain if they have any bodily defect ; if a purchase is concluded, the sellers commonly warrant for a fortnight.

What did Dr. Walsh see when he landed at Rio Janeiro in 1828? The whole labour of bearing and moving burdens performed by slaves in a state revolting to humanity. They were entirely naked, with the exception of a covering of dirty rags tied about their waist. Their skins, from constant exposure to the weather, had become hard, crusty, and seamed, resembling the coarse black covering of some beast, or like that of an elephant, a wrinkled hide, scattered with scanty hairs. In contemplating their persons, you saw them with a physical organization resembling beings of a grade below the rank of man, long projecting heels, the gastro-nomic muscle wanting, and no calves to their legs ; their mouths and chin protruded, their noses flat, their foreheads retiring, having exactly the head and legs of the baboon tribe.

Some of these beings were yoked to drays, on

which they dragged heavy burdens ; some were chained by the neck and legs, and moved with loads thus encumbered ; some followed each other in ranks, with heavy weights on their heads, chattering the most inarticulate and dismal cadence as they moved along ; some were munching young sugar-canes, like beasts of burden eating green provender ; and some were seen near the water, lying on the bare ground among filth and offal, "curled up" like dogs, and seeming to expect or require no more comfort or accommodation, exhibiting a state and conformation so inhuman, that they not only seemed, but actually were, far below the inferior animals around them.

Horses and mules were not employed in the way the slaves were ; they were used for pleasure, and not for labour. They were seen in the same street pampered, spirited, and richly caparisoned, enjoying a state far superior to the negroes, and appearing to look down on the fettered and burdened wretches they were passing, as beings of an inferior rank in the creation to themselves. Some of the negroes actually seemed to envy the caparison of their fellow brutes, and eyed with jealousy their glittering harness. Did I see any human beings degraded to the lot of "the beasts which perish," on landing at Stabroek ? Not one ; only a few malefactors working in chains on the roads ; but this sight I have often witnessed in the East : besides, white convicts work in chains in our dock-yards, and white convicts work in chains in the streets of New Orleans.

In justice, however, to the Brazilians, we must add, that from all I have read and heard of the treatment of their slaves on estates, they are far more humane than the Dutch, and their slaves soon become habituated to a country of which the climate so much resembles their own.

Whilst in South America I had not the good fortune to fall in with any one who had visited the beautiful French colony of Cayenne, rich in cloves, cinnamon, pepper, nutmeg, and other choice spices, and consequently could not inquire how negroes were treated there. The French are an amiable and kind-hearted people, and in Europe invariably treat their domestics well. I understand that in the French islands the house negroes are indulged, but the out-door negroes are often over-worked, though certain holidays are allowed them, and on Sundays they are very gaily dressed. When I landed from an Indiaman on the African Isle of Bourbon, some ten years ago, I was hauled on shore through the heavy surf by a gang of naked negroes, chained together, and I afterwards saw others cruelly flogged by French overseers. There is a flourishing slave-trade carried on at Martinique, Guadaloupe, and other French West India islands, and, as far as I could learn, *more slaves were imported from Africa in 1830 into settlements not British, than ever there were before.* How then can the British planter compete with foreigners? and how can he afford to sell his produce at so cheap a rate as they can?

CHAPTER VIII.

Visit the Morocco coast of Essequibo.—Attention of the Planters.—Their prospects.—Not allowed a hearing.—Old prejudices.—Additional labourers much wanted.—East India competition.—Mistake of a distinguished Writer.—Plough husbandry ought to be introduced.—Rice.—Negroes at times very provoking.—Anecdotes.—Contrivance to attract the Birds of the Forest.—Plantation Lima.—Again enter “the Bush.”—A Boat Song.—The Tapacooma Lake.—A Woodman’s retreat.—Forest amusements.—The Water Mamma.—A deserted Settlement.—Effects of Indian superstition.—Adventures.—Combat between a Jaguar and Cayman.—A Bush expedition.—Fascination of the Forest.—Effects of instruction in Gymnastics.—A pleasant predicament.—Sail for Stabroek.—Pleasant companions in the hold of a Schooner.—Land in safety.

FROM Wakenaam island I proceeded to the Morocco coast, and visited many estates between the Essequibo and Pomeroon. There is a broad road which leads along the coast to connect the different plantations, though the planters commonly go between Stabroek and their estates by sea. With the usual kindness of the planters, I was transferred, without trouble or expense, from the one house to the other, either on horseback or in a light chaise, and every attention was paid to my comfort and convenience. One jolly-looking old planter I met with, in talking of his prospects said, “By Jove!

Sir, I know very well that in a year or two we'll all be ruined by the influence of the saints at home ; they are so bitter against us that they won't believe a word we say in our defence ; and worse than that, though we are Englishmen and entitled to a hearing, we are condemned without being heard. Every now and then, a planter at home writes and publishes a pamphlet, showing the true state of our case, but no one reads it, and even when an impartial witness who visits the West (like the clever author of " Six Months in the West Indies ") pronounces a favourable judgment on us, our enemies immediately cry out, ' Oh ! this man lived on sugar-plums, and was treated with sparkling champagne ; no wonder then he speaks well of the planters.' But I am tired to death of the senseless outcry against us, and since it seems we are to be sacrificed, d—n it, I had rather it would happen at once, and have it over."

Every sugar-estate had its steam-engine, and some had two ; and the old Dutch windmills were in ruins. However, some of the grey-headed planters, like the prejudiced in general, are adverse to all improvements and innovations in sugar-making. In talking to one of these about the new mode of boiling cane juice *in vacuo*, and potting the sugar with syrup, so as to increase the size of the grain, he said, " I don't care a fig about improvements in sugar-making, only give me a good crop of canes ; the old plans are the best, they are easiest learned,

and are less expensive ; but we want hands, Sir : here we are with an immense country, almost too rich for canes, plenty of provisions for negroes, and hundreds of miles uncleared ; in many of the islands the negroes are starving, their masters have more hands than they can feed, yet they cannot benefit themselves and their people by bringing them here." I answered, " On the first view of the case, that seems very strange, but you remember that negroes were not allowed to be transferred from one colony to another, as it might open the door to smuggling in fresh slaves from Africa." " Very true, but I don't believe that a single fresh slave would be introduced, for since the abolition of the trade in 1807, no slaver has ever been detected within sight of a British colony. If we had more hands, we would supply the world with sugar, and as it is, we produce more than all the British West India islands put together, Jamaica excepted. But we are afraid of being undersold by the East India sugar. Is not labour there very cheap ?" " You may make yourself perfectly easy about the East India sugars," I replied, " they will never do you any harm ; the wages of labour, to be sure, are low in the East, but the quantity of work done is next to nothing ; it takes ten men to do the work of one here. If you have two men to work for you there, you require to have a third to look after them. You see then, that in reality, labour is very dear in the East ; besides, the freight is

heavy, and the distance between the East Indies and England is three times greater than that between England and the West Indies."

This gentleman was one of the few exceptions to what I so generally remarked in British Guiana, that the planters to the utmost of their ability tried to improve the manufacture of sugar. A deservedly popular writer, Mr. Galt, committed a great mistake some time ago, in a paper on the sugar colonies; he said, "The planters are very careless in the manufacture of sugar, they will not adopt the most approved modes for producing a superior article, they will not refine their sugars; the days of molasses and dirt ought to be now gone by," or words to that effect. Now, refined sugars are not allowed to be imported into England, only clayed; and really in the manufacture of sugar, the planters spare no expense, but immediately adopt (if they can) whatever is considered an improvement. Sometimes men of first-rate intelligence trip; "*Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*"—is due to Mr. Galt on this occasion.

The cultivation of the cane is certainly defective in Guiana. Plough husbandry ought really to be extensively tried there. The Americans succeed very well with the plough in the sugar-states of Louisiana and Mississippi. Guiana is flat like them, and has abundant food for cattle; unlike Barbadoes and other islands, where they complain of wanting fodder. Guiana has also a great advantage over the islands in her canals, which intersect

the estates in every direction, whereby the produce is conveyed to the mill with light labour, and at trifling expense. Why not then gradually diminish the number of “hoeing” slaves by substituting the plough, and use the limbs of brutes instead of men? If the soil is too soft for the hoofs of cattle, let broad boots be used, as in the morass between Manchester and Liverpool.

I saw a little rice on one estate, and I asked the manager why it was not more generally cultivated? He replied, “Rice succeeds admirably on this flat coast where it is easily irrigated, but if one man only plants rice, the birds all flock to his fields and eat up the grain; whereas, if all the planters would plant simultaneously, the loss among many fields would be trifling. We don’t think either, that it is so nutritive for our people as plantains.”

At the house of an assistant protector of slaves I heard a negro make some frivolous complaints against his master; but when the protector proceeded to take down his deposition, the negro retracted a great part of what he first stated; and it is a singular fact, that negro witnesses, when they see that their statements are recorded, generally give true evidence, and *vice versa*.

There is nothing so common as for negroes to take a lazy fit, and sham sick. One day I saw a negress come to a manager, and with a rueful face say, “No can work, massa.” “What’s the matter?” “Very seek, massa.” The pulse was immediately felt and the tongue examined—all right;

“Head turn round, massa.” On another occasion, a negro had absented himself without leave, and I saw him approach the house limping and supporting himself as if in great pain, “What now, Cupid?” “Snake bite um foot, massa—no can walk, massa.” I watched him after he had turned the corner, when he shouldered his stick and stepped out as nimbly as needs be. Negroes are really at times excessively provoking.

In my progress along the coast, I was most hospitably and kindly treated by Colonel Dougan, the Honourable Mr. Bean, Mr. Mackie, and the Honourable Mr. Rose; their civilities to me I duly acknowledge and always gratefully remember. At Mr. Bean’s I remarked an ingenious contrivance to attract the birds of the forest to the veranda: a yellow and ripe banana was placed in an open basket, and fearlessly the feathered tribe in their gorgeous plumage picked the sweet fruit. I was strongly tempted to ensnare some of these visitors, for the sake of their handsome coats, but I placed a restraint on my evil propensities.

Mr. Rose, at Lima, (an estate in a high state of cultivation with five hundred negroes upon it,) was so kind as to man a canoe with some of his people, and I again proceeded into the bush, to visit an Indian settlement and the Tappacooma lake, eight miles in length, formed by a dam between two sand hills, and intended to irrigate the Morocco estate in the event of a scarcity of rain. The negroes merrily plied the paddles, and we brushed past the

overhanging trees to their favourite song of “ Velly well, yankee, velly well oh !”

De bottley oh ! de bottley oh !

De neger like de bottley oh !

Right early in de marning, de neger like de bottley oh !

A bottle o’ rum, loaf a bread,

Make the neger dandy oh !

Right early in de marning, de neger like de bottley oh !

We passed through the Tapacooma lake, and saw those trees leafless and rapidly decaying whose roots were unaccustomed to be continually submerged. Spurbills and spoonbills were fishing in the newly-formed lake, and the black clay nests of the Marabuntahs, or wasps, were surrounded by the pendant habitation of the orioles swinging from slender branches.

I hung my hammock in the forest retreat of Mr. James Frazer, an eccentric countryman, to whom I became much attached. Indifferent to luxuries, either in dress or lodging, he ranged the forest in quest of game in check shirt and trowsers. His cottage was simple and unadorned, thatched with palm leaves, and the sides enclosed with split maniocole, but the jaguars, snakes, and vampires had free admission if they chose, and I was lulled to sleep by the melancholy note of the houtou, and the distant cry of the howling baboon. Thermometer during the night 70°.

With Frazer I visited the logie of Wallabanari, an Arrawak chief; traversed the gloomy forest, or paddled our canoe in the dark creeks. Sometimes we made the woods resound with the martial music

of the pipes, or on the beams of a logie competed with the Indians in gymnastic exercises ; then induced them to play their rude flute of bamboo, or simple viol with three strings, and enjoyed their dance, performed by three or four men clasping one another with their arms, advancing, retreating, pirouetting, and stamping the ground with their heels, to the song of “ Na, na, na !”

We were paddling our canoe among the water-lilies of the Tapacooma lake, when Frazer related a singular instance of superstition in the Indians. He was engaged to superintend some Arrawaks who had agreed to work at the dam which formed the lake, but they declared that they would not commence their labours until the Water-Màmma was appeased :—this is a sort of mermaid, believed by the Indians to inhabit the fresh waters of Guiana and to be possessed of malign influence. “ I told the Arrawaks,” said Frazer, “ that instead of appeasing the Water-Màmma of the Tapacooma creek, I knew how to catch it ; so I set to work and stuffed a bear-skin jacket with straw, and put it into an old puncheon full of water in a dark corner. Three of the Arrawaks were persuaded to come and see it, which they did in fear and trembling, and no sooner had they looked into the puncheon than they fled, fell sick and actually died, though we took the greatest pains to explain to them the trick that had been played them.

One afternoon we paddled down a dark creek, and landed where an overgrown path led into the

bush. We proceeded cautiously along it, to allow the snakes to get out of our way; though neither they nor other wild animals will attack unless suddenly disturbed, always excepting the horrid bush-master: fortunately these are seldom seen, and the Indians are warned of their presence by their dogs, and making a wide circuit round them, they transfix them with their arrows at a safe distance.

Leaping over the fallen trees, and brushing aside the branches of the underwood with our paddles, we came to an elevated and cleared spot, on which were three deserted logies: here a tragedy had been enacted, which caused the Indians to desert a place of evil omen. At a Pigwarry feast an Arrawak had been killed in a moment of irritation, and the murderer, a Peï-man (or sorcerer), was sentenced by the tribe to be shot by the nearest relative of the murdered man after digging his own grave. With this latter part of the sentence he complied, and was led out to execution; when left alone, he suddenly sprang into the forest; one man fired at him and missed him, and dreading his spells he sickened and died. Under the floor of one of the logies were the graves of the murdered Arrawak and the bad marksman.

As we were proceeding leisurely with the stream on another occasion, I said to Frazer, "You must have met with a number of strange adventures, and seen many strange sights in your wanderings?"—"Yes," said he, "particularly when I used to visit the Oronooco, to procure the laurel oil, so famous

for the cure of chronic rheumatism. I went principally by water from Stabroek to Angostura, not by way of the coast, but by the numerous rivers that intersect all parts of Columbia south of the Oronoco. We made short portages from one river to the other, the Indians carrying the canoe and the baggage on their heads.

“I was twice bit by Labarri snakes. I cut round the wounds, and one of them still gives me pain. One of my dogs was bit by a labarri in the head; the labarri-plant was at hand—I rubbed the root of it into the wound, and there is the dog alive and well. You see Antonio, there, a Spanish Indian, in the bow of the canoe; well, he and myself, and a few others, once went up the Apoori, a branch of the Oronoco, to look for turtle’s eggs, and on that expedition we saw a very strange sight, which might not be believed at home—and I don’t like to tell it to every one.”—“Don’t hesitate to tell it me, Frazer. I have seen sights myself that I don’t like telling, as I would rather have a character for veracity than be considered one who has seen wonders, and is fond of doing them full justice in the narration; but communicate freely, and I’ll reciprocate.”—“Well, then; we went up the Apoori and came to the sandbank where the nests were, and whenever there was a smooth part of the sand we dug down eight or nine inches, and commonly found five-and-twenty eggs, with a soft shell like parchment. After procuring as many as we wanted, we dropped down the Apoori and got into

the Oronooe, broad and deep, and bordered by heavy forests. We were passing a spit of sand on a clear afternoon, when we saw a large cayman, ten feet long, asleep on the sand, at the distance of a few feet from the water's edge. We approached in the coorial, to shoot the monster in the eye, but, as we neared him, a spotted jaguar was seen to issue from the edge of the forest, and stole towards the alligator, creeping with his belly on the ground like a cat preparing to surprise a bird. We drew off, to see what would happen. The leopard made a sudden spring on the cayman, and they both disappeared in the river, in a cloud of spray and foam. The cayman did not reappear, but the nimble jaguar soon rose to the surface, blowing with his exertion; sitting on his haunches, like a dog, on the sand, he licked himself for a few moments, and recovering his breath, he again plunged into the river like a Newfoundland dog. Up he came again; still no cayman was seen, though the water was much agitated, and air-bells rose to the surface. At last, after a third dive, he dragged the alligator on the sand in a dying state. We wanted to secure them both, and fired away all our powder and ball at the jaguar, but he just sat looking at us, grinning and growling as we fired, and we were obliged to move off; but next day we got the dead cayman, but don't know what became of his conqueror. No part of the cayman had been eaten; perhaps a ball may have spoilt the jaguar's appetite." — "Yes, or perhaps he had attacked the

cayman merely through natural animosity, like the ichneumon the snake."

About this time there was a bush expedition, to recover some runaway negroes. The manager of an estate had been changed: then the negroes usually try what he is made of; some are insolent, others refuse to work, and when threatened with punishment, run away and secrete themselves in the forests. Part of the militia on the Morocco coast was called out, principally consisting of the book-keepers; but their inefficiency was soon proved. On the second morning, one man complained of illness for want of his coffee; another said he was unable to proceed, having lost a shoe in the mud; and a third said he must look after his helpmate, who was in the family-way. Frazer and a few Arrawaks soon tracked the runaways, and they were lightly punished under the eye of a protector.

I had now been some weeks in British Guiana, and I thought it high time to proceed to the islands. I therefore quitted the woods with extreme reluctance, and returned to Plantation Lima.

To certain temperaments, removing for a time from all connexion with mankind to "the silent shade of some sequestered spot," is very congenial, and even beneficial; it estranges the mind from the pursuit of sensual enjoyment, enables us to see the folly and vanity of the votaries of pleasure, and induces one to exclaim,

“ Give me, indulgent gods ! with mind serene,
And guiltless heart, to range the sylvan scene ;
There pleasing objects useful thoughts suggest :
The sense is ravished, and the soul is blest.”

But it is sinful and presumptuous in one who has been placed in a certain station in society, altogether to seclude himself. He has duties to perform, which in retirement he must neglect, and therefore, though, in common with many others, I was fascinated “ with the boundless contiguity of shade,” where one is independent of Fashion’s edicts, I determined to break the spell and return to Stabroek.

On a dark and stormy night I bade adieu to Mr. Rose and his excellent lady, and walked down to the Lima stelling, or pier. A small schooner rode at anchor at some distance from it ; and on hailing her, a boat was sent to bring me off. A heavy sea was running, and it was dangerous for the skiff to come alongside the pier. Accordingly, the negro steersman allowed the waves to wash it under the piles, and I suspended myself by the hands, with a depth of some three or four fathoms water below me, in order to drop into the boat. It was an interesting predicament, no doubt, though rather a ridiculous one. The sea rolled the boat in and out, the negro was unskilful, and there I remained swinging in mid-air, like the epicurean in the trials of initiation, and calling lustily to direct the steersman. The spray washed

my feet, and the wind confounded me; at last I dropped into the boat, and nearly stove it, but reached the schooner in safety.

The negro captain then directed the anchor to be weighed, and to stand out to sea; but, with the usual carelessness of a black crew, after sail was made the schooner was allowed to run aground; she struck heavily on the hard sand: however, by great exertion we got her head round, and bore away under a reefed mainsail.

Black clouds obscured the heavens, and torrents of rain accompanied the heavy squalls of wind; the influence of sleep began to steal over me, and as there was no cabin, I descended to the dark hold to woo the "sweet restorer." I felt for a pillow on which to repose, and found a bunch of plantains; and wrapping myself up in my cloak, I lay down, but a more comfortless night I have seldom experienced. The schooner rolled and pitched heavily, agitated the bilge water, which saluted the olfactories with aught but "the perfumes of Arabia," and the rain poured in upon me through the seams of the deck. I was not the only occupant of the hold; squadrons of cockroaches flew against me, mosquitoes stung me, rats nibbled at the plantains, and ran over me, as also did long files of ants; then an unwieldy hog, that usually occupied the fore part of the hold, paid me a visit, and commenced grunting at my ear. I struck out in desperation, and drove him off for a time. I got no rest from my

numerous tormentors till morning dawned, when I discovered three negresses sleeping beside me, on their way to the tread-mill, and over-head hung a basket containing two Camoodi snakes ; but after a voyage of twenty hours, I arrived, unscathed, at Stabroek, and then, as on many other occasions, was compelled to laugh at the annoyances to which I voluntarily exposed myself.

CHAPTER IX.

Embark in a schooner bound to Barbadoes.—Crowded cabins.—Bid adieu to South America.—Passengers' anecdotes.—Yankee Skippers.—Change of colour in the Sea.—A Barbadian dame.—Barbadoes descried.—View of the Island from the Sea.—Carlisle Bay.—His Majesty's ship Shannon.—Bridgetown.—Enmore.—Population and produce of Barbadoes.—Agriculture.—Public buildings.—The Governor.—The Bishop.—Schools.—The country.—Worthing, the Barbadian Brighton.—The shooting season.—Upton.—Codrington College.—The Principal.—Course of Instruction.—The black Population rapidly increasing.—A part ought to be removed.—Distressed state of many Proprietors.—Peculiar habits of Negroes.—The Barracks of St. Anne.—Healthy situation for Troops.—Forts, Magazines, and Hospitals.—The Court-house and Gaol.—Government of the Island.

I NOW engaged a berth in the *Paget schooner*, Captain Gilbert, proceeding to Barbadoes, and at three o'clock one morning took leave of my old schoolfellow, Mr. James Glen, of the wealthy house of Glen and Co., and rowed down the Demerara river to join the vessel, which, though a "clipper," was little larger than a ship's launch; the negro boatmen nearly upset us among the hungry sharks by running foul of a hawser, but after some trouble we got safe on board.

I found all hands asleep, and beheld three ladies, consisting of two actresses and a young creole, who occupied berths in the small cabin, where was also





my resting-place. The ladies said they preferred the gentlemen's cabin to their own, as it was cooler ; and the captain said that the other cabin was full of mulatto women. Here was another trial of initiation, so we lay down in our clothes in our berth, with the consent of the fair.

At daybreak the tide and wind favoured, and lightly bounding over the billows, we bade adieu to the shores of South America, and saw the long line of mangroves gradually disappear in the horizon. We had sixteen passengers on board ; the men, all sea-sick, lay about the deck in their cloaks, and the ladies lay in their berths, as it rained heavily during the day. We were extremely crowded, the sea was very rough, and our little bark seemed every moment about to be immersed beneath " the briny flood ;" the white-crested waves curled high over her stern, but she heeded them not, but gallantly scudded before the blast—

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις στατός ἵππος ἀκούσῃσας ἐπὶ φάτῃ.

" The wanton courser thus with rein unbound,
Breaks from his stall and beats the trembling ground,
Pampered and proud he seeks the wonted tides,
And laves in height of blood his shining sides."

After our evening meal on deck, the passengers began to recover a little, and sat round the main-mast telling stories. The subject of these was principally instances of the devotion to the main chance, and the cunning tricks of the Yankee skippers who visit the British posts in the West. I beg to give three of these anecdotes.

A Yankee captain was lying in the Demerara river when his brother arrived from the States; the skipper said, "Well, what news from Charleston?" "Not much news, I guess, only father dead;" on which the other cooly responded, "Oh! H——l."

A Yankee sold an English captain a watch, warranting it to go, but next day it was brought back with this address; "D——n it, you humbugged me about this here watch, it won't go at all."—"A bargain's a bargain," said Jonathan; "to be sure, it won't go, unless you carry it, I reckon."

Some time ago a Demerara merchant purchased a barrel of beef from a Yankee captain, who shortly afterwards sailed. On coming to the bottom of the barrel a horse's head was found in it: the merchant said nothing, but when the skipper returned to Demerara, he sold him a hogshead of sugar, which, when examined at the custom-house at Boston, was found to have a head of the heavy green heart-wood, six inches thick, which was forthwith hung up as a proof of British honesty; but no mention was made of the choice morsel which had been found in the beef-barrel.

We pitched and rolled over the troubled deep; the graceful tropic bird soared high above us, appearing with its long tail and wings like a white cross, beautifully relieved against the dark rain clouds; but we shortly left these and the turbid water of Guiana behind us, and a clear sky and clear seas succeeded.

I was much amused with an elderly Barbadian dame on board; she delighted in "porter cup," made of Barclay and Perkins' entire, with the addition of water, sugar, and nutmeg. Occasionally she would call out to young Mungo, her servant, in a drawling voice, "Bæe, go to drip, and bring me a little wæeter, please;" then in a lower key, "when pass buffet, put a little rum in it, please." "Yees, Missa; want nutmeg, Missa?" "Go lang, you black niggars you. What! you tink I drink punch, eh?" "No, Missa, beg pardon Missa."

On the second night we backed our topsail, lay to occasionally, and were struck heavily by the sea; the ladies ever and anon called out, thinking we were on a rock. When the third morning dawned, we perceived from "the high and giddy mast" the dim outline of Barbadoes.

All sail was cracked on the schooner, innumerable shoals of flying fish rose round us, and we stood towards the land. Hills of some elevation were observed, but we steered towards where a long point stretched to the south-east: gradually the beauties of the island were revealed, the grouped foliage, the white houses scattered amongst it, the windmills, and the cane-fields of bright green, all gladdened the eye, and presented the appearance of a well-cultivated garden.

It was Sunday, in the month of June, and no living thing was seen moving on shore, only the leaves of the palms skirting the beach coquetted with the breeze; not a sail was observed until we

weathered a point and some dangerous reefs—then Carlisle Bay opened before us, a noble panorama.

Round the bay were umbrageous trees, and the neat houses of Bridge Town; at one extremity of the bay was a formidable battery, and behind it the handsome barracks of St. Anne. “The meteor flag of England” floated proudly from its staff, and “long,” I exclaimed, “may it continue to float over these glorious isles of the West!” The corresponding point of the bay was covered with a lovely grove of cocoa, the royal palm, the sea-side grape, and the beautiful though noxious machineal.

In the centre of the picture the land rose above the town, and sloped far into the distance to the hills of the Barbadian Scotland, clothed in a rich and varied garment, studded with pleasant villas and enlivened with a bright sun. Ships of war, merchantmen, and coasting schooners, rode at anchor, with pendants and ensigns displayed, for it was Sunday; and I was quite fascinated with the enchanting prospect.

His Majesty’s frigate the Shannon, of high reputation, lay outside the other vessels; a long seine, or fishing-net, hung between her fore and main rigging, and her boats were seen to dash out from her sides under broad lug sails, competing with one another in a race to sea. A shot or two was fired over us to bring us to; we were boarded by an officer, and in the evening landed on a stone pier.

There was a remarkable contrast here to the wooden houses, moist soil, and canals of Guiana.

The streets of Bridgetown were narrow, clean, and perfectly dry ; the brick houses were shaded with piazzas, and the free coloured inhabitants and negroes, neatly dressed, lounged about on the day of rest. I found a comfortable chamber at Enmore, the delightful residence of Mr. Cavan ; but alas ! that house, so cool and agreeable, with its shady trees and marble verandah, is now a heap of ruins, the dreadful hurricane of August having prostrated it in the dust.

For a fortnight I remained in this most ancient, most loyal, and most windward colony, and spent my time very pleasantly and profitably, generally studying until three o'clock, and then sallying out with a white cover over my cap, and taking exercise on foot or on horseback for three hours.

Courteous reader, I am not going to trouble you with a history or " present state " of Barbadoes, but a mere outline of this remarkable island, in size nearly equal to the Isle of Wight, producing, with what the abolitionists call " a worn-out soil," four hundred thousand hundredweight of sugar annually, besides exporting poultry and plantains to the Leeward Islands, and supporting a population of one hundred and twenty thousand souls, eighty-three thousand of whom are slaves, and rapidly increasing !

The scanty soil, on a coral substratum, is carefully manured, and the sloping fields are divided into terraces, to prevent the rain washing away the precious mould. The highest land in the north-

eastern quarter is one thousand feet above the level of the sea; and there, in deep valleys, are the remains of the ancient forest which covered the whole island in the days of the Good Queen Bess. In other parts of the island, hill and dale are equally cultivated with the light hoe. Fire-wood is scarce, and great quantities are brought from Demerara. There are no steam-engines here, but at least three hundred windmills for grinding the canes, besides others for drawing water from the deep wells.

Bridgetown, extending for two miles round Carlisle Bay, contains twenty thousand inhabitants; a square with a statue of the immortal Nelson; and some churches without steeples, but the cathedral, a massive pile, had a square tower. The respectable inhabitants, though greatly reduced in means, tried to be contented with their lot, and lived in comparative comfort till the late awful visitation unroofed their dwellings and overthrew their walls; but they have a noble spirit within them, and I doubt not but that Bridgetown will shortly again rise from its ruins, and that yet prosperity may dawn upon the people.

Spikes Town, on the west coast, is a considerable place; but Hole and Austin Town are mere hamlets. The remains of old forts and honey-combed guns are thickly scattered all over the island, which has never surrendered to a foreign foe.

Let me gratefully recall to mind the hospitality of the governor, much beloved by the Barbadians, Sir James Lyon,—his abundant table, his choice

wines. West Indians are urbane and hospitable themselves, and they delight in a ruler who partakes of their own character. King's-house and Pilgrim or Government-house, were both of them residences worthy of the chief of the Windward Islands.

The Bishop of Barbadoes (Dr. Coleridge) had been most indefatigable; a church and chapel were in each of the eleven parishes of the island; and besides the central school for one hundred and sixty white boys, founded by Lord Combermere, there were many others of recent establishment, for both sexes and for all colours.

In riding into the country, though some of the white roads were lined with trees, yet the generality of them were painfully glaring to the eyes. On each side it was interesting to remark the peculiarity of the cultivation; four distinct crops of cane, maize, tobacco, and sweet potatoes, would be seen in the same field, and in alternate drills.

Worthing, a small sea-bathing place, was a most delightful spot; lofty palms shaded the wood, which was washed by the lively ripple of the crystal sea, and comfortable houses accommodated the invalids. Near Worthing is a swamp, which is celebrated as the shooting-ground in the month of August. Then innumerable flocks of wild fowl resort there, sheds are erected which let for a high price, and under these the sportsmen sit in chairs with a table and refreshments before them, and a black boy looking out; on seeing the birds ap-

proach he whistles, when the active venator rouses himself and fires; but two or three others may fire at the same flock at the same time, and they all rush out after the volley and often dispute for the prize.

I spent some pleasant hours at Upton, the beautiful residence of Mr. Barrow; seated on an eminence surrounded with trees collected from "furthest Ind and Afric's burning plains," and a garden where

" Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue
Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed."

While at Upton, I visited Codrington College in a light caleche; on our way we halted at Mr. Barrow's upper estate, and in passing the fields where his people were at work, they cordially saluted him with " Good marning massa, good marning; how de massa?" Truly it was a pleasant sight to see the affection of these poor people.

After a drive of several miles and a steep ascent, we found ourselves on a level plateau romantically enclosed with high cliffs; at the bottom of an avenue of living columns, was the long range of the college, and the residence of the principal, both constructed of solid masonry which had withstood many hurricanes.

The situation of the college is one of the most delightful that can possibly be conceived; shut out from the world by hills possessing the superior advantages of the sea breeze, and an unbounded view

of the Atlantic, and refreshed by a clear stream of water collected in front into a small lake. Gracefully the long leaves of the palms waved over our heads as we rode down the avenue, and I was quite enamoured of a spot so suited for study and reflection.

We were received by the Rev. Mr. Pinder, the principal, in his usual kind and obliging manner, and by him conducted over the establishment. There were twenty-three students receiving instruction, and it was a singular sight to observe these young men walking about the grounds in their academicals, the cap and gown of our universities, between the Tropics.

The students belonged to different islands, and their board and education only cost 35/. a-year, exclusive of clothes ; they are examined and ordained by the bishop, if intended for the church ; and it is really a pity that so noble an institution as this college should not be more patronized by the West Indians than it is. The fault partly lies with the trustees of the late General Codrington, who for years were studious only to educate and render comfortable the negroes on the estates left for the support of the college, and until lately neglected the great object of the charity—the education of the whites ; forgetting that no slaves can be so well treated as under masters who have themselves benefited by moral and religious instruction.

We returned in the afternoon to Upton, and spent a pleasant evening with a few friends.

The black population of Barbadoes is now so numerous and disproportionate to the size and resources of the island, that the restrictions laid by Government upon the transmission of slaves from one island to another is here, especially, severely felt by the planters, who, in the neighbouring islands of Trinidad or Jamaica, or in Guiana, might find a ready mart for their superabundant population, and at the same time benefit these noble colonies. "Slavery," says the philanthropist, "would thus be perpetuated." I answer, that planters and negroes are at present in danger of starving in the old islands; that slaves could be more effectually prepared for emancipation in the midst of abundance, than while wanting daily bread; and that I see no danger whatever of slave-smuggling taking place, since registers are now so strictly kept, since there is such an establishment of protectors and assistant protectors, and since there are so many agents of the abolitionists in the colonies, who would be anxious and ready to report any introduction of Africans, if such an improbable occurrence took place.

Why do the negroes increase in Barbadoes and decrease in Jamaica? Simply because the climate of the former is so much better than that of the latter.

It is with pain I record the fact, that in the island of Barbadoes, which was considered one of the most productive of our western colonies, the

greater number of the estates are mortgaged considerably above their value; indeed, the nominal proprietors can only be considered as the agents of their creditors, who receive all their produce, and allow them a fixed income; and it grieves me to reflect how many unfeelingly contemplate further inroads on the property of the already impoverished planter.

Among the negroes of Barbadoes, the custom prevails of having two or three mistresses, but either free or on different estates; one of these is always an old woman who feeds and supports her young friend. It is very difficult to persuade negroes to marry, here or elsewhere—they prefer concubinage; and on this account their masters sustain heavy loss. If a free negress has a child by a slave, the mother and child are supported clandestinely from the estate to which the father belongs, and the child does not become the property of the negro's master: but if a female slave has a child by a free man, then the child and its mother remain in bondage.

I was much delighted in viewing the esplanade at St. Anne's, and the handsome barracks, where the troops (as they ought always to be between the tropics) were coolly and comfortably lodged. Lofty well-ventilated rooms, shaded by broad verandahs, were occupied by rows of iron bedsteads, with the Wellington arm rack at the head of each. The beds were of hackled corn husk; and though the men got five days in the week salt provisions, yet they

looked healthy. The penny a day compensation in lieu of an allowance of liquor had worked wonders among the recruits, though it is difficult to keep an old soldier out of a canteen.

Three years ago the parade-ground at Barbadoes was a swamp; in crossing it to a dry spot for drill, the men carried their shoes in their hands, perhaps were half drunk from the effects of the debauch of the night before, and had most of them swallowed a "slug," or "chuck," to keep the fog out, as they called it. Drill over, they returned to their barracks wet, went to sleep wet, and often got up in a burning fever. Now, the parade is perfectly dry, and there is much less drinking; so that there were fewer in the sick list in Barbadoes in June last, than there were amongst a like force in England.

The greater number of the soldiers of the 35th and 36th regiments had brown wives; many of these ladies were very well educated, but owing to their depressed circumstances, and the numbers there are of them in Barbadoes, they are glad to place themselves under the protection of private sentinels.

Captain Byrne of the Royals, and Fort Adjutant, was kind enough to accompany me round the barracks, forts, and magazines. St. Anne's fort, though small, would yet make a good defence, and in it there are excellent magazines stored with the munitions of war, and an armoury with many thousand stand of arms in the highest order. In the hospi-

tals there were a few fever cases, principally drunkards; and in the asylum some negro soldiers in chains, dangerous lunatics.

In visiting the court-house, I was surprised to find that the gaol was a part of the same building; debtors and rogues were confined in the ground-floor. The tread-mill, "that sovereign rectifier," was in the yard, and the imprisoned were allowed to lounge in and about the court-house whilst the judges were on the bench. Classification is much required here, else mutual corruption must extend among the incarcerated.

Besides the Governor, his twelve Councillors and the twenty-two Members of the House of Assembly, the laws are administered by twenty-seven Judges (planters and merchants); but as few or none of these have been educated for the bar, His Majesty's Attorney General assists them in their deliberations and decisions. There are many evils attending this system, which I need not enlarge upon. Electors are those who possess really or nominally ten acres of land.

CHAPTER X.

Leave Enmore to make the tour of the Island.—Splendid View from Hackleston's Cliff.—Precipitous descent.—The white Creoles.—Plantations.—Turner's Hall Wood.—The boiling Spring.—Harrison's Cave and the animal flower cave.—How to travel between the Tropics.—Creole hostess of the Bridgetown Clarendon.—A Joan-Johnny dance.—Unpleasant finale.—A quality Ball.—An exclusive Party.—Barbadian drinks.—Fair Barbadians.—Character of the white Inhabitants.—A Cock-fight.—The mysterious Vault.—The charming residence of Vacluse.—Strange infatuation of a Negro.—The first hurricane of the season.—Preparations for departure.

ONE morning I set out on horseback at six o'clock, with Mr. Best, late of the 8th hussars, to make a tour on the windward side of the island. We rode gaily out to Blackman's estate, and there breakfasted, and it was delightful to remark the air of comfort and excellent state of cultivation which the country presented. The house at Blackman's was a Montpellier for salubrity; on a lofty site, and surrounded with a garden crowded with rare exotics. After our meal of fruit, bread, and coffee, I put on an Oriental turban, and we continued our excursion. After a smart canter, we suddenly found ourselves on the verge of a very precipitous descent, Hackleston's Cliff by name; and here, from one of the highest points in the island, one thousand feet above the level of the

sea, a most beautiful and extensive prospect burst upon us. On the slope below were plantations with groves of trees around them, fields of bright green, streams glittering in the sunbeam, and beyond, the ocean reposed in silent splendour—

“It plays with the clouds, it mocks the skies,
Or like a cradled creature lies.”

We then commenced the descent of a path so rugged and precipitous that, viewing it, and my own extraordinary figure in eastern guise, I was transported in imagination to the awful mountain passes of Persia, the Koutuls, where loaded mules are continually precipitated among the rocks far below, strewed with rich merchandize and white with bones.

We gave our horses the rein, and slid and stumbled down to the bottom; here we fell in with a Barbadian, trudging along to his small farm in Scotland; he talked learnedly on cock-fighting, and belonged to a class of white men who are noted for indolence, vicious propensities, and ridiculous pretensions. We looked in at several houses, and were served with cooling liquors, but declined punch and man-dram; and then made for Turner's Hall Wood, a part of the aboriginal forest. The soil had now changed from the black mould near Bridgetown to red argillaceous earth, and in some parts of Scotland (which we were now in) we observed as it were chalky cliffs, though calcareous only in appearance.

The scenery was varied and extremely pictu-

resque; there were hill and dale, the rich tints of tropical vegetation, and glimpses of the Atlantic at the bottom of the long vistas of the valleys between the ridges. We rode past some small pools, where tar issued out of the earth, and then skreened ourselves from the scorching rays of the sun under the shelter of the ancient forest. Tying our horses to a tree, we scrambled down to the boiling spring, and on approaching the dark gulley where it is situated, we became sensible of an unpleasant gaseous odour; and discovered a hole in the ground, from which there were "mutterings of unutterable things" proceeding. We threw water into the hole, and a violent bubbling immediately ensued; and if we had applied a light, the inflammable gas would have burst into a flame. Harmless snakes, monkeys, and birds of varied plumage, inhabit Turner's Hill Wood, which by the ancients would have been considered a delicious retreat for fauns and dryads.

I shall not now stop minutely to describe the other natural curiosities of this part of Barbadoes. Harrison's Cave, incrustated with beautiful petrifications, and through which, like Styx, a stream flows, but clear and limpid; and again the animal flower cave, where in a natural basin into which the tide flows, there is a rock with beautiful varieties attached to it, of that remarkable zoophyte—the hydra; they appear like petals of the marigold, of purple, yellow, and green colours, to attract the insect prey, but when touched they contract and become invisible. This remarkable production

forms the connecting link between the animal and vegetable kingdoms of that extraordinary gradation, or chain of beings, proceeding from the rudest unorganised matter up to man.

We rode home in the evening, and after a bath felt no bad effects from the long excursion. Protect the head from the sun, be temperate, and exercise may be taken between the tropics with impunity whilst the thermometer stands in the shade at 110°.

To get an insight into creole character, I sometimes strolled down to town, and sat for an hour with the well known Betsy Austin, the hostess of the Bridgetown Clarendon. At the door, lolling in her easy chair, would be seen the jolly dame, decked in gaudy finery and superintending the light labours of some female slaves, whom she occasionally rated in no measured terms. She kept a very clean house of entertainment, and was always remarkably civil. “Ah! you stranger gentleman, I know very well why you come down and see me. You go away and laugh. The devil take you, Sally, be quick and bring the captain a chair; will you take cocoa-nut water or lemonade, sir?” “The cocoa-nut, if you please.”—“You have heard some people abuse me, I suppose, sir, but I don’t care, I tell you;—damn you, Pompey, why don’t you sweep up the floor, you black neggar you.”

One evening whilst sitting in the marble verandah at Enmore, and listening to the ceaseless hum of

the insects and the gentle rustling of the trees, and thinking of again venturing on the treacherous deep, I heard the lively sound of a drum at some distance, and immediately repaired to where the negroes were amusing themselves under the mild rays of the Cynthian queen. On a level spot, surrounded by small houses of coloured and black people, was a bench, on which were seated two negro fiddlers and a thin fellow beating a drum; behind stood a man shaking violently a calabash filled with small stones and reeds, and singing with contortions an African air. The crowd formed a ring, and those who wished to dance the Joan-Johnny stepped forward, presented the leader of the band with a bit, and he

“ Bid the fiddle to the banjar speak,
The banjar to the calabash without,”

and a couple would twist their bodies, thump the ground with their heels, and circle round one another to the inspiring strains. The little black urchins, as usual, were setting to one another on the outskirts of the admiring crowd, or kneeling down behind their elders, who would be pushed over amidst shouts of laughter, or mimicking the actions of the white lookers on. I was much amused with the scene, but a violent end was put to the entertainment, for a huge stone was hurled at the musicians by some unknown hand, which wounded the leader's bow-arm. Immediately there was a great uproar, and a second stone nearly demolishing an instrument, the party broke up,

venting curses on the unseen spoiler of the sport—probably some choleric freeman, who did not like sounds of obstreperous mirth near his dwelling.

The “quality balls” of the coloured people are well worth visiting. The brown beaux and belles are gaily dressed—kid gloves, silk stockings, “tight continuations,” and quizzing-glasses, are seen on the gentlemen; whilst the ladies sport feathers, silks, book-muslin, tinsel turbans, bustles, and satin slippers.

I was fortunate enough to be present at two balls of the “*Première Qualité*.” They were conducted in a similar manner to what we are accustomed to at home. At these parties I saw many fair forms, who left a lasting impression; and an additional interest has been excited—for these pale and dark-eyed maids have since had to hurry from their couches at the dead of night, the roofs blown from their dwellings, and the walls crumbling in ruins behind them.

Whilst the dance proceeded, the thirsty souls among the gentlemen would adjourn to pledge one another in tea-anne and coffee-anne, (preparations of congo or mocha, with spirits,) or each would take up a huge glass vase of sangoree, with a “sry” of lemon-peel floating on it, and quaff deep draughts of the tempting beverage, half wine, half water, with sugar and nutmeg. It was really very enticing, but we must resist seductions of all kinds whilst wayfaring.

Many of the fair creoles whom I had seen in the

morning languidly reclining on a couch, and apparently incapable of the slightest exertion, were now as it were, inspired; their eyes sparkled with animation, the colour played in their cheeks, like “a rose crushed on marble,” and with delicate shapes they moved in the dance gracefully and untiringly.

“What do you think of the Bims or Barbadians?” said an English resident, accosting me at one of these balls. “Why, I have been so short a time on the island,” I replied, “that I ought not to give an opinion at all. The impressions I have formed of them are these:—open-hearted and good-tempered, with no small opinion of themselves or of their island; which I am not surprised at, as it seems a right pleasant island, and its turtle and punch, I am sure, find favour in your eyes.”—“Yes,” answered he; “but many of the Barbadians are very ignorant. Would you believe it, Sir, only the other day a Bim asked me how long the people were locked up in England? ‘Locked up!’ I answered; ‘what! do you think the cold confines us to the house?’—‘Yes.’—‘Not in England, my good friend. True, it does so in Siberia; you must be thinking of that part of the world, where if you yawn, such an icicle forms in your mouth that it requires a hatchet to cut it!’ Now, the Bim believed this nonsense, and repeated it to his friends.”—“I can assure you,” I retorted, “that the ignorance of the Barbadians regarding England is more excusable than the absurdities we hear regarding the West Indies at home; a certain

party make people believe that in the Antilles there is nothing but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, chains and whips, yaws and yellow fever."

I said that cock-fighting was one of the principal amusements of the lower class of white Barbadians, but the middle class also is partial to this cruel and disgusting sport. At a main, fought by the birds of two well-known sporting gentlemen, the pit was quite full, and great amusement was derived from watching some of the betters and lookers on. They seemed to feel such intense anxiety in the fate of their favourite birds, that every stroke had an electric effect upon them. A hideous, sunburnt buccaneering-looking fellow appeared to suffer as much as the cock upon which he had staked his money; suddenly he would writhe as if in acute pain, his hands clenched, breath drawn in, and his body bent forwards, watching with convulsive eagerness the pending battle. At last, his bird received the *coup de grace*, when, with a wo-begone face, and mouth screwed up, he uttered aloud, "Whew! he ben't a cock; he's a 'orse; see how he jumps on the flats o' his foots!"

It is not generally known, that in Barbadoes there is a mysterious vault, in which no one now dares to deposit the dead. It is in a churchyard near the sea-side. In 1807 the first coffin that was deposited in it was that of a Mrs. Goddard; in 1808 a Miss A. M. Chase was placed in it; and

in 1812 Miss D. Chase. In the end of 1812 the vault was opened for the body of the Honourable T. Chase ; but the three first coffins were found in a confused state, having been apparently tossed from their places. Again was the vault opened to receive the body of an infant, and the four coffins, all of lead, and very heavy, were much disturbed. In 1816 a Mr. Brewster's body was placed in the vault, and again great disorder was apparent in the coffins. In 1819 a Mr. Clarke was placed in the vault, and, as before, the coffins were in confusion.

Each time that the vault was opened the coffins were replaced in their proper situations, that is, three on the ground, side by side, and the others laid on them. The vault was then regularly closed ; the door (and a massive stone which required six or seven men to move) was cemented by masons ; and though the floor was of sand, there were no marks of footsteps or water.

The last time the vault was opened was in 1819 ; Lord Combermere was then present, and the coffins were found thrown confusedly about the vault ; some with the heads down, and others up. What could have occasioned this phenomenon ? In no other vault in the island has this ever occurred. Was it an earthquake which occasioned it, or the effects of an inundation in the vault ?

In England there was a parallel occurrence to this some years ago at Staunton, in Suffolk. It is stated, that on opening a vault there, several leaden coffins, with wooden cases, which had been fixed

on biers, were found displaced, to the great consternation of the villagers. The coffins were again placed as before, and the vault properly closed, when again another of the family dying, they were a second time found displaced; and two years after that, they were not only found all off their biers, but one coffin (so heavy as to require eight men to raise it) was found on the fourth step which led down to the vaults, and it seemed perfectly certain that no human hand had done this. As yet no one has satisfactorily accounted for the Barbadian or the Staunton wonder.

I spent one day at a most charming residence, Vauclose, on a high spot, delightfully cool, and commanding extensive views. The proprietor said that some Moravian brethren had established themselves in his neighbourhood, and that those of his negroes who attended the instructions of that excellent fraternity, were extremely sober and industrious. His butler had lately died, and he gave him a handsome funeral, for he had served him faithfully for many years, and the master was anxious to testify his respect for his servant. Shortly after this, a healthy negro refused all food, lay with his eyes open, and gasping as it were for breath; the doctor could discover no ailment, and it was conjectured that the butler's funeral had so excited his envy, that he determined to have a similar one, and to starve himself. The master came in, and said aloud, "If this negro dies, I mean to throw him into a hole, and bury him with

his face down." It is almost unnecessary to add that, shortly after this speech, the sick took up his bed and walked forth healed.

One night whilst I was ruminating on my intended route in bed, the wind, which had shifted suddenly from one point of the compass to another, at last set in to blow with fearful violence from the south-east ; it roared among the trees, bent them, and tore off branches, injured the roof, and seemed to sweep with resistless violence across the island, which it drenched with heavy rain. This was the first hurricane of the season. Next morning I walked down to Carlisle Bay, to see how it had fared with the shipping : the men of war and merchantmen were pitching violently at their anchors ; immense waves, in long ridges of green water, broke over the pier-head and shook the stones. Some of the smaller craft had drifted on shore, and when the wind moderated a little, the launches were sent from the frigates to collect all the "Liberty-men" on shore and prepare to go to sea. I also prepared to go to sea, for I calculated that immediately after a storm there is likely to be moderate weather. "The vehicle to mount is that which has been upset the day before."

CHAPTER XI.

The great hurricane of 1831.—The English suffer from their prejudices.—Will not change their habits in any climate.—The hurricane of 1780.—Injudicious style of building.—Flat roofs recommended.—The writer apologises for his remarks.—Barbadoes before the hurricane of 1831.—The last great hurricane more destructive than the former one.—Destruction in Bridgetown.—The effects of hurricanes illustrated.—Atmospherical phenomena on the 10th of August.—Commencement of the gale.—Awful and sudden gusts from different points of the compass.—Destructive effects.—The air filled with fragments of wood and stone.—An earthquake and shower of hail.—The salt spray.—Examples of the violence of the wind.—Fire-balls.—Exposed situation of delicate females.—Appearance of Barbadoes after the hurricane.—The dead and dying.—Destruction of St. Anne's barracks and the public buildings.—Great loss of shipping.—The wounded, how disposed of.—Generosity of the Governor.—Liberality of the merchants.—Resignation and enterprise of the people.

IN the splendid possessions of Great Britain situated between the tropics, I have often remarked to what a prejudiced nation I belong. In the East, or in the West, our countrymen are continually at war with the climate—attempt to build their houses as they are wont to do at home, dress as if they intended to walk the streets of London, and eat and drink as if the thermometer never exceeded 65°. One would imagine, that having spread themselves over the four quarters of the

globe, Britons would now have voluntarily become endowed with the properties of Proteus—that they would be able to change their habits according to change of scene; but as yet this is far from being the case. Our African travellers were spit upon and reviled because they dressed as Britons and as Christians; and Englishmen abroad suffer continual inconvenience, great loss of property, and life itself prematurely, because they will not study and accommodate to the peculiarities of foreign climes—

“Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.”

Many of the West India islands are subject to dreadful hurricanes in the months of August and September—Barbadoes, in particular, has suffered most severely. In 1780 it was laid waste, and four thousand five hundred of its inhabitants were buried under the ruins of the houses; yet I remarked that the style of building throughout the island was, as usual, very badly adapted to the climate. The houses were generally on a small scale, the rooms were not sufficiently lofty, and the roofs, covered with tin or shingles, retained the heat, as the iron roofs of Moscow, during a great part of the night.

Then again, instead of excluding the sun by light mats, as in the East Indies, every window was left open, and thus what little comfort was gained by the circulation of air was counterbalanced by the reflected heat from the white roads. But the great inconsistency in the mode of building at Barbadoes was this: instead of flat roofs, the houses were

covered in with a lofty and clumsy structure, quite disproportionate to the rest of the building, and offering a resistance to the wind, which too often has occasioned their destruction. To this it may be replied, that the houses thus constructed are much cooler than others ; but this is disproved, for in Eastern countries, where the heat far exceeds that of the Antilles, and where inland there are no refreshing sea-breezes, the houses are flat-roofed, yet cool. With flat roofs, single stories, and substantial piazzas, hurricanes are not to be dreaded. The barracks of Antigua, occupying the highest ground on the island, resist all tempests, and are built on the above excellent principle.

But why should I indulge in this train of observations after the direful calamity of the 10th of August 1831 ? why should I irritate and vex those who have suffered so grievously, by insinuating that they were partly to blame for what has befallen them ? “Shame be my portion, and let my head be sprinkled with ashes,” if I were to be so unfeeling as to upbraid the luckless inhabitants of Barbadoes for their heavy misfortune ! I merely give my own impressions, and those of others who have visited the East, on the manner in which their houses were built, in the hope that in future the Oriental plan may have at least a trial in the Antilles.

But let us now proceed to describe, as concisely and distinctly as possible, from various authentic documents, the dreadful visitation of the autumn of

1831. On the morning after the hurricane it was truly said that Barbadoes, the gay, the prosperous, and the happy—one of the finest of the colonial isles—the Brighton of the West Indies—the mart of commerce—the home of hospitality—Barbadoes in its pride, was no more. Bridgetown, the capital, was a heap of ruins ; and country, villa, and hamlet, were alike level with the earth.

On Wednesday, the 10th of August, it pleased the Almighty Disposer of joy and sorrow to visit this island with one of the most destructive hurricanes ever known in the western hemisphere ; and misery, irretrievable misery to thousands has been the dreadful consequence. The islands of St. Vincent, St. Lucia, St. Domingo, and Cuba, with the city of New Orleans, also came within the track of the destroying tornado, and suffered most materially.

Those who recollect the great hurricane of 1780, all agree that the wind on the late tremendous gale was far more violent than the former, and the truth of this may be proved by mathematical demonstration. If the force of the wind in 1831 in five hours did twice as much damage as was done in 1780 in eleven hours, it follows that the last hurricane raged with far greater fury than the first ; and that more than twice as much mischief was actually done by the last storm, a view of the face of the island, even after several weeks had elapsed, sufficiently testified.

After the gale of 1780, about one-fourth of the houses with which the island was thickly dotted

remained standing; whereas on the 11th of last August no more than two in every twenty remained. In the first storm Spikestown suffered very little injury; it is now little better than a heap of ruins. With regard to Bridgetown, it is certain that it suffered far greater injury in 1780, but that circumstance is to be attributed as much to the duration as the violence of the storm. On these dreadful occasions one street protects another, and the protecting street must be blown down before the others can be violently assailed. Had the last gale lasted in its utmost severity only two hours longer, every house in the town, every building, both of stone and wood, throughout the whole island, would have been completely levelled with the earth, and would have met with the fate of Jerusalem, without one stone or timber being left on another.

An intelligent Barbadian gave me a very clear account of the nature of a West Indian hurricane. The wind does not on such an occasion, as is commonly imagined, act with a broad sweep, bearing down with equal force every thing before it; it comes in squalls or whirlwinds, and very frequently a tornado does not extend in *width* beyond two or three miles. The next squall may exert its force on another part of the sea or land, not far distant from the first.

To make this more intelligible, suppose there are two vessels at sea, about two miles from each other, east and west; let us imagine the squall to come from the north or south, it may strike

one of the vessels and miss the other; one may be dismasted, while the other has only a moderate breeze. The next squall may take the other vessel, and leave untouched the dismasted one. Were the vessels, instead of being east and west of each other, to be north and south, exactly in the track of the wind, the case would be altered, the same squall would equally affect both. One unfortunate planter in Barbadoes had his house blown down as early as half past two A.M. by a dreadful gust from the north-north-west. At that moment a gentleman who lived not more than a mile and a half to the east of the other, said he was "snug in bed listening to the wind, which did not seem to him at that time to be alarmingly high." It is evident, then, that the blast which struck the first missed the second; but he also suffered, for the south-west wind at six in the morning unroofed him, and this same gust levelled with the earth most of the buildings in the southern and eastern parts of the island. On the western coast the cocoa-nut and other trees lay in general from the north-north-west to south-south-east; in the interior of the island they lay from south to north.

On the evening of Wednesday, the 10th of August, certain appearances in the sky indicated unsettled weather, and many persons in Bridgetown prognosticated that there would be a gale before the morning, but few anticipated so dreadful a visitation as that which took place. The wind was

at times rather high, and about ten o'clock there was a shower of rain, which was succeeded by a calm ; after this a dense mass of clouds gathered over the horizon, and remained for some time suspended in a gloomy canopy over the devoted island, as if the spirit of the storm was looking down from his dark throne, and contemplating the feeble works of man which he was about to overthrow.

At midnight the clouds burst in a severe squall, which was followed by a torrent of rain. Then a smart breeze set in from the north-east, and the atmosphere was clear and bright, and smiled as it were malignantly for a while :—the wind increased ; in two hours it blew a tremendous gale, and the atmosphere, portentously dark, was lighted up at short intervals with vivid flashes of the electric fluid. At half past two the gale lulled ; but at three came the force of the hurricane, when heavy, sudden, and awful gusts seemed to shake the foundation of the island itself.

“ And all around, the clouds, the air, the sea,
Rose from unnatural, dead tranquillity,
And came to battle with their legions.”

Then the work of destruction commenced ; every succeeding five minutes there was heard in the town the dreadful crash of falling trees, chimneys, roofs, and houses themselves, above the roaring of the gale. Those who had cellars to their houses took shelter in them, overpowered with feelings of intense agony ; they were helpless, and could only commit themselves to the care of a merciful

Providence. Huge pieces of timber, tiles, and bricks would continually strike the frail tenements, and the inhabitants whose houses had been overwhelmed, would be heard wandering about the streets crying for shelter.

The greater number of the houses were levelled with the earth or unroofed ; the largest trees were torn up by the roots, or their branches were twisted off them, and whirled like the autumnal leaves before the blast ; the air was filled with shattered fragments, threatening with instant death those exposed without shelter to the pelting storm. The majestic palms would be tossed to and fro as a withe, then snapped off with an appalling crash, or uplifted from the earth with terrific force, and dashed against the buildings they were wont to shade ; and tombstones prostrated, exposed the coffins of the dead.

Some imagined there was an earthquake during the storm. There was a rapid shower of hail while the wind was between north and west ; then it shifted and blew fiercely from the east, veered to the south-east, and about six o'clock burst from the south-west with renewed violence, accompanied with a deluge of rain. The sea all this time rolled in mountain waves towards the shore, and was lashed into one immense sheet of white foam. As the quick rising billows uplifted their heads, the wind carried the salt spray into the troubled air, and swiftly bore it on its pinions over the ill-fated island.

During the tremendous squall from the north-west, which swept the western part of the island, the power of the wind was such, that a heavy cart was blown into a pond a considerable distance from it, and taken out afterwards piecemeal. A large leaden cistern (attached to a sugar mill), which received the cane juice, was battered or *crumpled* by the wind like paper squeezed in the hands; and those who were driven into the fields, so far from being able to stand on their legs, could not even sit up, the wind was so violent as to throw them on their faces.

The lightning flashed tremendously in their eyes, and appeared to strike the ground only a few yards from them; but such was the roar of the wind, that the thunder could not be heard. Innumerable fire-balls were seen to fall from the clouds. Those who saved themselves in their cellars or hurricane chambers, although doubtless they had dangers and terrors enough of their own (the dread of the walls falling in upon them, keeping them in a state of horrible agony and suspense), yet could form no adequate idea of what was seen, heard, and felt by those who lay in the open fields.

The gentleman beforementioned said, that whilst he lay with his family around him in a pool of water, the blue lightning appeared just to miss his wretched group, and the phosphoric light, which seemed to be falling in great balls from the clouds, in one instance was brushed from the head of a child, who providentially remained unhurt. The

dreadful howling of the wind, which resembled the not far distant roar of heavy artillery; the pelting of the rain drops, which seemed to fall like small shot on the eyes, and reddened and bruised the tender necks of the delicate females; the pieces of timber falling within a few feet of the trembling group; the impenetrable, the Cimmerian darkness which shrouded the sky in a black pall in those intervals when the lightning glared not, were horrors which were not witnessed by those under cover—*they* have yet to learn what the fearful accompaniments of a hurricane are.

Conceive the situation of those who, reared in the lap of luxury, never before had been exposed to the rude warfare of the elements; who, accustomed to every comfort, and even superfluity which money could procure, were driven forth from their dwellings at the midnight hour, their roof pursuing them and flying in thousands of fragments over their heads; then lying down on the damp ground, cramped and chilled by the cold, paralyzed and stupified with terror, and continuing in this state for several hours! The bodily and mental torture of those who were in health must have been excruciating, but what must the state have been of delicate females who had been lingering on a bed of sickness? and many of these there were, some in the open fields, separated from their relatives and friends, and almost in a state of nudity; helpless infants too were in like manner torn from the arms of their distracted parents.

From six to eight the wind and rain continued, but there was little standing to encounter the fury of the hurricane; then the tempest subsided, and winged its flight to the north-west. The noise of the winds and the crashing of the falling ruins having ceased, the shrieks of the affrighted, and the groans of the wounded and dying, broke in mournful sounds and pitiable accents on the ears of the less unfortunate survivors; all was desolation and ruin—not one house in Bridgetown had escaped, and thousands of the population of the island were buried, or fallen among the ruins of their own habitations, or severely injured. “The groans of the people spread over the hills; it was like the thunder of night, when the cloud bursts on Cona, and a thousand ghosts shriek at once on the hollow wind.”

Every street was impassable, every roof was gone, every lane closed up, shingles and immense pieces of wood, stone, and bricks were knee deep in the streets. In one place the heads of the numberless dead were seen; in another their arms and legs, in many instances severed from their bodies. Those whose strength remained, commenced a sorrowful search for the respective members of their families, some of whose lifeless bodies were disinterred from the ruins to be transferred on boards to another grave, whilst mangled forms of others were dragged forth frightful from their bruises, and making the hearts of their sympathising relatives bleed with anguish. Wives would be seen crying bitterly for the loss of their husbands, mothers weeping for

their children, sons and daughters lamenting the loss of all that was dear to them in life. Then again, those who unexpectedly met after a signal deliverance, would rush into each other's arms and cry aloud for joy.

On the garrison of St. Anne, the storm spent a portion of its severity; fifty men were killed under the ruins, and upwards of two hundred officers and men were seriously injured. The wind rushed under the broad verandahs, tore off the roofs, demolished the walls, and the pillars were levelled in rows.

The country villas were now no more, and the once beautiful and smiling scenery was now also gone. No vestiges remained of the woods and the groves of palms, and even the soil which produced them was washed away; almost all the public buildings were razed to the ground. Besides the magnificent barracks, and the military store-houses, Government-house and King's-house, Codrington-college, the custom-house, theatre, and national school, were heaps of ruins.

The shipping which rode so proudly and apparently so safely in the noble bay had disappeared, but the beach told the fate of many ships, brigs, schooners, and cutters; some of them were stranded, others foundered at their moorings, and a few were driven to sea; twelve at least were seen high and dry, total wrecks. Twenty years will not repair the damage done in Bridgetown alone, and a century, it is said, will not place the planters or estates

on the same good footing as they were on the 10th of August, the fields which on that day presented so luxuriant an appearance, were completely changed into a desert; neither canes, corn, nor provisions, with a few inconsiderable exceptions, were left in the ground, and the sugar mills were all overthrown.

The cathedral, although it received considerable injury in the roof, was yet made available as an hospital, and presented a dismal spectacle. There the dead and the dying were borne from different places, and the bruised taken for surgical assistance. The pews were filled with white, free-coloured, and slaves, no respect of persons was shown—all, by a very judicious and benevolent arrangement, were provided with every comfort, with food and medicine, and were most diligently and regularly attended by the physicians and surgeons of the town, assisted by the medical gentlemen of the army; the clergy and the staff took their watch day and night, and ministered to the comforts of the afflicted patients.

His Excellency Sir James Lyon, himself a considerable sufferer in worldly estate, and having been driven to the cellar of Government-house, was most prompt in calling the legislature together, and did all, which in his situation he could do, for removing or lessening the public distress. Besides, that excellent and distinguished officer who happily for the colony then administered the government,

most generously announced his determination not to receive his colonial salary during the severe exigency of the island.

The active exertions of the ecclesiastical chief, Lord Bishop Coleridge, and of the venerable the Archdeacon, can never be remembered but with gratitude: the spiritual and temporal wants of the distressed were most promptly attended to by these distinguished persons; and crowded congregations offered up to that God who had humbled and afflicted, but not destroyed them, their sacrifice of thanksgiving, humiliation, and prayer. It was indeed truly gratifying to see the pious feelings of the people generally, rich and poor, bond and free, under this afflicting dispensation. A subdued spirit, a patience, a tranquillity of feeling, a cheerful and truly Christian resignation, pervaded all ranks. Many who had always occupied spacious apartments, furnished with every convenience and every elegant article of domestic use, were now, with their families and dependants, and in many instances with their neighbours, who had been deprived of *all* shelter, huddled together, ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty persons, in a negro-house or a cellar, a kitchen, a stable, or a coach-house.

It is said that "the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb," and this was verified in the present instance: a pestilence was dreaded from the putrid dead and unburied bodies of men and animals, a famine was to be feared, and a negro insurrection; but providentially none of these calamities took

place, for the cup of suffering of the Barbadians was already full. Some of the slaves showed insolence and insubordination, but the majority of them behaved in the most exemplary manner ; and though at first paralyzed and stupified, they at last made every exertion to preserve their own and their masters' property. Would this have been the case if their proprietors had previously ill-treated them ?

The noise of the carpenter's hammer was heard in every direction, and all exerted themselves to restore shelter. Food was abundant, and we record the fact with feelings of unmingled pleasure, that the merchants of the town disdained to take any advantage of the distress of the moment to raise the price of any articles of necessaries. They not only disposed of them at the usual prices, but also effectually prevented any base attempt to monopolize articles of food by retailing them, thus accommodating families with small quantities at a time. This noble and disinterested conduct must ever be remembered with respect and gratitude.

The conduct of the neighbouring colonists cannot, either, be too highly extolled ; sums of money were voted from the public chests, subscriptions were opened, and vessels freighted with timber and provisions for the sufferers, not only at Barbadoes, but also at St. Vincent's and St. Lucia ; and though themselves suffering from the general depression in the West Indies, one and all most humanely and promptly stepped forth in aid of the kind, brave, and hospitable people, who on every occasion of

colonial distress have evinced themselves so ready to help others. The government also most liberally granted £100,000 to Barbadoes, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, &c. to assist in repairing the damage they had sustained ; £50,000 of which sum was appropriated to the use of Barbadoes.

The amount of property destroyed in Barbadoes was estimated at two millions and a half ; and five thousand human beings miserably perished, and were severely wounded in the ever memorable hurricane of the 11th of August 1831. So great a destruction of property, and so melancholy a loss of life, is believed to be without a parallel in history, except where whole cities with their inhabitants have been swallowed up by earthquakes, or overwhelmed with volcanic eruptions.

CHAPTER XII.

Sail from Barbadoes.—A party in the cabin.—Anecdotes of Clapperton the traveller.—Appearance of Tobago.—The drowning mariner.—View of Scarborough.—Robinson Crusoe.—Land.—Delightful prospect from Mr. Noding's residence.—Effects of Defoe's celebrated narrative.—The citadel.—The country.—Visit the Governor.—See Trinidad from a hill.—Attractions of the fair Creoles.—Dangerous to travellers.—An excellent character.—Ridiculous fears of a Tobago proprietor.—Ride across the Island.—Effect of a hurricane.—Courland Bay.—Outline of the history of Tobago.—The Negroes.—Natural productions of Tobago.—The currents and Crusoe's cave.—Indians from the main.

I took a passage for Tobago in the mail schooner *Jean*, the fastest in commission in the Antilles, and lately the yacht of Sir W. W. Wynne; and one stormy-looking evening, with black clouds hanging over Carlisle Bay, we stood away from "Little England."

It blew fresh and rained during the night, but we had a very comfortable party in the cabin, where the tale went round as usual. Our captain had been a shipmate of that daring traveller Clapperton, and told many characteristic anecdotes of him. "He was a d—d smart fellow, sir; drew well, but was not particularly clever with the pen; he was first of all in the merchant service, and then in a man of war, and it was not long before he got

on the quarter-deck, but he ran away when a midshipman, and some time afterwards was pressed from a merchantman, and was placed in the same ship he had been in before, where a second time he was made an officer, for he was a thorough seaman every inch of him. He was tall, and strong as a young elephant.—Lord ! I remember him springing across the forehatch, and taking our two biggest hands in the ship and rapping their heads together for quarrelling ; he could floor an ox, sir,—such a fore arm ! He was headstrong, but of a fine, generous, and brave spirit, and proud as Lucifer of the navy. Once we were lying off Macao, in China, the captain was on shore, when a typhoon came on ; it blew as if St. Antonio had burst his bags, and we all thought the frigate would go down at her anchors. I was in bed, under the effects of mercury to cure a stiff attack of fever, when Clapperton jumps down into my berth with only a pair of nankeen trowsers on, rolled up to his knees—‘ Well, old fellow, get up,’ says he, ‘ I ’m come for you, there ’s no time to be lost, we must make a swim of it ; we ’re old cronies you know, and I would rather save you than any man aboard.’ ‘ It’s of no use,’ said I, ‘ water will kill me, I may as well lie here, but take the captain’s commission, his decoration, and his mother’s picture and save them ;’ so he tied them in a handkerchief round his neck, and was actually forcing me out of my cot when the gale began to lull. D—n it, Clapperton was made of the right stuff, depend upon it ; and his death is a great loss to the service.”

We were not long in sighting Tobago ; it seemed when seen from the north to be a mass of high mountains, had a very gloomy appearance, for black precipices descended abruptly into the sea, and rain clouds rested on the heavy forests.

“ The land appeared a high and rocky coast,
And higher grew the mountains as we drew,
Set by a current, towards it.”

We ran along shore, the colour of the sea being livid like molten lead, with very strong currents. We had a view of the melancholy island in its whole extent, the high central ridge of basalt, with separate hills rising from it, and below it, and forming deep and narrow ravines, through which streams were seen to pour. The north side terminated in abrupt precipices, with the dark islands of little Tobago and the dangerous rocks called St. Giles's, skirted with white breakers, dashing high upon them with sullen roar : the south side terminated in plains and lowlands. Truly it was a sight of gloom, very different from smiling Barbadoes.

A few plantations were observed on the sides of the mountains, and we saw in a bay a five-hundred-ton ship, stranded in the late hurricane. It was evening, and though unable to run in with the land, yet we could not lie too, or the current would soon have swept us out of sight of the island ; so we stood away, avoiding the dangerous rock called the Minister. We were straining our eyes to catch the lights of the houses in Scarborough, (for here,

as in the other West India Isles, there is a deplorable want of light-houses,) and were at the same time all anxiety to clear the sunken Minister, when a voice of distress hailed us from the sea; we answered the shout, but got no reply, and it was so dark that we could not perceive the wretched being from whom the voice proceeded; we shortened sail, but it was useless—the wind whistled through our cordage and the sails flapped heavily, but the sea and sharks had done their work.

We saw a twinkling light afar off and stood in again, and got under the rocks of Scarborough and into a fine bay. From the heights above us numerous lights flashed out, and at eight o'clock the bugles from the citadel sent forth their warning sounds. We anchored, and at early dawn a strange sight presented itself: on our right, nearly five hundred feet above us, was Fort George, on a conical hill below it was the town—houses and trees intermixed—before us; the head of the bay was covered with wrecks, as if the island had lately been visited by an invader. Cocoa-nut trees fringed the water, and the land sloped away to the main ridge, green and verdant, and on the left the land stretched out long and low to where it ended in Sandy Point. Flocks of pelicans flew round us, dived, brought up fish, and goodnaturedly allowed the parasite gull to light on their heads and partake with them. Reader, it was here that Defoe laid the scene of the shipwreck and hermitage of the celebrated Robinson Crusoe.

I landed, and walked up the steep streets of Scarborough, admiring the handsome forms of the creoles of French extraction, sitting at the doors of the houses. I passed a large town-house and a methodist meeting-house, conspicuously situated, and delivered my letters to Mr. Noding, one of the most respectable merchants on the island, with whom I took up my residence. What a delightful view of Rocky Bay, famous for turtle, and of the garden of the island, where the rich black mould is highly cultivated, did Mr. Noding's house command! and above all of the strand where "the hermit is said to have walked about, lifting up his hands, and his whole being wrapped up in the contemplation of his deliverance from the raging ocean, then cast his eyes on the stranded vessel, which the breach and froth of the sea nearly covered, and reflected on all his companions who were drowned, and looked to Heaven and thanked God in the ecstasy and transport of his soul that his life was spared." Yet thus he often thought, "though monarch of all he surveyed."

" Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestowed upon man,
Oh! had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again!"

What a tide of recollections of our boyish days did not this scene occasion, and of the extraordinary effects of Defoe's great work; of how many it had unsettled, of how many it had sent roaming, and imbued with a spirit of adventure. Good Master

Daniel ! though your fiction (if fiction it be, which I really much doubt,) suggests very useful instruction “ by showing how the native powers of man may be exerted for surmounting the difficulties of any external situation ;” yet the wonders of the life of your hero are so exciting, and of such variety, that you have occasioned thousands of youths of lively imagination and ardent temperaments to court danger and difficulty, and have moistened many a fond mother’s and sister’s cheek with salt tears, for those destined never again to be a light to their eyes.

I visited the citadel with poor Knocker of the Royal Engineers, now no more, and was sorry to see that the quarters of the troops (a wing of the Royals) were not very agreeable, and that there was a deadly morass under the hill of Scarborough. This morass had been partly drained and cultivated, still there is much to be done ; and it would cost but little to prevent the overflowing of the low land by the tide, which here rises four feet. It would also be worth while to employ the military, morning and evening, in throwing up earthen ramparts with turf revêtements, where the stone ramparts are open and unfinished. Some officers try how they can save their men between the tropics from all fatigue ; that is not the secret of health, but moderate exercise and labour, with temperance.

I mounted a horse to visit the Governor, General Blackwell, who resided in a hired residence some

four miles in the country, till the new Government house (on an elevated site, with the town and Rockley Bay below it,) should be completed. In traversing the country I was struck with its beauty, and forgot my first impressions of the island from the sea; many of the hills, though steep, were so regular, that they were cultivated to near their summits, that is, those in the direction of Courland Bay, on the west side of the island; while to the north it was one wild and romantic scene of mountain and wood, with numerous cascades in dark glens, where wild hogs and birds, resembling the beautiful varieties met with in the Spanish main, are found.

General Blackwell, who had served unremittingly from the taking of Seringapatam to the end of the last great Continental war, received me with great urbanity and kindness. I left his Excellency, and proceeded to one of the highest points in the centre of the island, and had a noble view across it from Rockley to Courland Bay. To the south was seen the Island of Trinidad. What says Crusoe? "It being a very clear day, I fairly descried land, whether an island or a continent I could not tell; but it lay very high, extending from the west to the west south-west, at a very great distance; by my guess it could not be less than fifteen or twenty leagues off—probably the savage coast between the Spanish country and Brazil, whose inhabitants are indeed the worst of savages, for they are cannibals or man-eaters, and fail not to murder

and devour all the human bodies that fall into their hands."

I returned to Mr. Noding's, and spent the evening with some of his friends, acquiring information regarding the island, with the pleasant interlude of music.

I may say with truth, that if the wanderer does not keep watch on his heart while voyaging among the Antilles, he will find them to be isles of Calypso, and there forget Ithaca. Fair daughters of the West, "your languid beauty captivates in the morning, and the lively gaiety of your heart delights at eventide." True, you are not very industrious, but that is the fault of your early education among indolent Africans, and also arises from the enervating effects of the climate; but after a visit to the old country, you return graceful and accomplished, with mild and gentle manners, and pure hearts. I saw a Penelope in Tobago, whom I fain would have wooed, but the Fates forbade it; with hair black and glossy as the raven's wing—with eyes like those of doves "by the rivers of waters washed with milk, and fitly set—and with a countenance like Lebanon, excellent as the cedar;" her form like the beautiful cypress in a garden of Iran amidst beds of spices and pleasant flowers—her voice like that of the boolbool telling his loves to his favourite rose.

Though at the risk of offending a friend, I cannot omit giving a sketch of the career of a gentleman of Tobago, so highly to his praise; presenting

at the same time a picture creditable to humanity, and one which ought to attach us more and more to our species. Of a respectable Dutch family, he was shipwrecked, when a mere infant, on the island of Barbadoes, and lost all his relatives ; he alone was saved, and was left a naked and helpless child. A kind-hearted planter adopted him, tenderly reared him, educated him, and established him as a merchant. He was intelligent and industrious, and fortune was propitious. He settled in Tobago, and was living in comfort and independence, with a charming wife and family, when fortune frowned on his benefactor in the evening of his days. He then eagerly solicited him to share his dwelling with him, and there I saw him.

A young man who had been left considerable estates in Tobago, went there lately from Liverpool to see his property, but the demon of yellow-fever seemed to haunt him whilst he remained on the island. He was in constant dread and alarm ; brought with him a large supply of chlorate of lime ; carried some continually about his person ; white-washed his room with it, and sprinkled it on the floor. It was quite laughable to see his apprehension ; he thought, he talked, he dreamt of nothing but “ the black vomit ;” and one evening whilst at dinner, on some one by way of joke telling him that “ a case” had just occurred in town, though in reality Tobago has been remarkably free from yellow-fever of late years, he got up from table, hurried down to the beach, embarked in a vessel

that was to sail for England next day, and was off without previously arranging his affairs; he being of opinion that —

“ The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
That age, ache, penury and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what he feared of death.”

I started one morning at an early hour to breakfast with the Governor, and visit some of the plantations and the west side of the island; Knocker, as before, accompanied me; an excellent young man he was, quiet and gentlemanly in his deportment, and I believe fully prepared for the dread visit of the remorseless blighter of youthful hopes and anticipations.

We everywhere saw the effects of the late hurricane: trees lay across the road which had been cut up by the heavy rain; the rivers at the bottom of the steep hills had risen ten feet at once, and swept off houses, mills, and cattle, the plantains and yams of the negro grounds. The canes too had slipped down in many places, and it was calculated that £15,000 of damage had been sustained on the estates, and £6000 by the shipping.

With my oriental head-dress, I rode all day in the flaming sun with impunity, but was drenched by some heavy tropical showers. In descending to Courland Bay, a beautiful sea view opened upon us; palm trees waved on the ironbound shore, on which the breakers played and coquetted with the

black rocks ; a single droguing (coasting) sloop lay at anchor in the smooth water before a battery of cannon placed at the point which commands the entrance of the harbour ; and the scattered houses of the small town of Plymouth, half hidden in foliage, were immediately below us.

It is not known by whom Tobago was discovered, but its abundant production of useful woods, fertile soil, and numerous streams, attracted a small colony from Barbadoes in 1625, which shortly afterwards abandoned the island, and left perhaps the goats and cats of which Crusoe makes mention. The Dutch and Courlanders alternately possessed the island, and from the latter Courland Bay is named ; but after Tobago fell in 1677 to the French, it lay desert and neglected until 1757, when a French hermit was discovered by the Stirling castle, who had been living alone for twenty-one years. Since 1803, it has been in the undisputed possession of the English.

I observed and heard that the negroes in Tobago were well treated and contented, and seemed to be on excellent terms with their masters ; their houses were built of boards, or wattled, and consisted of two apartments, with a portico in front of many of them ; and here, after the day's work was over, might be seen the families enjoying themselves in thoughtless levity, or else basket-making, and preparing their trays of market goods. On Saturday night a negro wench balancing an empty bottle on

her head, and rattling a calabash filled with small pebbles, advances with a dancing step to the manager, and sings,

“ Ax de bottle what he da want,
Massa full him, massa full him ;”

whilst Tim makes a triangle out of a stirrup and a rusty key, and Jack vigorously thumps a skin stretched across a barrel, throws back his woolly head, and shouts with delight at his own rude music.

Though the country of Tobago is for the most part improvable, there is but little of it in cultivation; still it is valuable for supplying timber for ship-building, and victualling for fleets. Merchants and planters may here make fortunes if the fanatics would only leave them alone. If the naturalist visits the island, he will find it abound in fruits and flowers, and in birds of the most splendid plumage, in great numbers and of infinite variety. I saw several beautiful collections, consisting principally of mannikens, perroquets, and humming birds. Basalt, sienite, and trap, form the highest ridges, and I picked up some madrepores on the hills, and enriched my sketch-book with many interesting views.

It will be in the recollection of my readers, that when Robinson Crusoe put to sea in his canoe, he describes minutely the currents which set round his desolate island, and how they seemed to be affected by the stream of a great river on the main, doubtless the great Oronooco. So correct is the descrip-

tion of the set of these currents, that they could only have been seen to be so particularly noticed. "Surely," I exclaimed, "Defoe's work has a true narrative for its basis;" and will it be believed that near Sandy-point there is a cave, answering the description of the one in which the hermit saw the frightful monster, the old he-goat, glaring upon him? The entrance to this cave is hidden by brushwood, which requires to be cut away before the mouth of it is reached. The cave is level and dry, and divided into two apartments, and the floor is covered with the skeletons of goats; near it is the sandy beach where the print of the man's foot paralyzed Crusoe.

I was cogitating on all the similarities I had observed between Tobago and the island of Crusoe, when on walking to the beach I discovered two canoes of Carib Indians which had just arrived, assisted by the currents from Trinidad or the main; not, as in days of yore, to partake of a bloody feast, but to barter fish, basket-work, and variegated wood for cutlery and beads. These people were nearly naked, of a dark olive colour, their faces round and plump, eyes sparkling, nose small and straight, a good mouth set with ivory teeth, and withal comely, handsome people, perfectly well-made, and with strong limbs; then I thought of the Man Friday, and was perfectly convinced that I trod the soil hallowed in the recollection of the English youth, as the scene of the hermitage of their esteemed favourite Robinson Crusoe.

CHAPTER XIII.

Sail from Tobago.—Adventure of a French Doctor.—A narrow escape.—Sight of the lofty shores of Trinidad.—The Kingfish.—Pass the Boccas.—Bay of Chagaramus.—Combat between a Whale and Thrasher.—The Port of Spain.—The Antilles well adapted for Panoramas.—The first Alcalde.—Drive through the Capital of Trinidad.—The Cathedral.—Beauty of the Creole Women.—The Catholic Church.—Visit the Markets.—Feathered Scavengers.—The late Captain T. Abercrombie Trant.—Environs of Port of Spain.—The Government House at St. Anne's.—The Barracks of St. James.—The Church Service ought to be curtailed for Soldiers.—Trinidad Races.—The Coloured Spectators.—Sacrifice to Bacchus.—Sable Divinities.—The Spanish Ladies.—The Carnival.—The ride to St. Joseph's.—Swamps.—Injudicious clearing of Timber.—Great fertility of the Soil.—Sugar Estates.—Manner of Purchasing Estates.—The Cocoa Planters ruined.—Climate of St. Joseph's good.—Mortality in the West Indies less than that in the East.—The Lepers.

ONCE more upon the waters, the anchor weighed, jib, fore, and mainsail set, pennant and ensign displayed, and the long black hull with its narrow red streak buries its bows in the rolling sea. We steered cautiously out of Rocky Bay, passed the dangerous reefs, and two conspicuous red rocks with shrubby tops, white with sea-fowl, and saw a large turtle entangled in the seine set by the mulatto fishermen. We soon left behind us the pleasant houses of Scarborough, which ere long

dimly blended with the verdure of Tobago ; and gladly careered over the waves. In any other craft we should have been washed fore and aft, but the rake of our masts was such, that we were lifted clear over the sparkling crests, and left a bright snowy track in our wake.

One of our passengers was a French doctor, who said he was a botanist, making a tour among the Antilles ; when he afterwards left us, he omitted to pay his passage money, thinking, perhaps, that men of science ought to be franked everywhere. I got into conversation with him, and he said, that a short time before he had sailed from Surinam, in a schooner of fifteen tons, bound for Martinique ; so small was she that the water was “ flush ” with the gunwale ; there were only the Dutch captain and two hands on board, and one of the last was laid up with ophthalmia. The captain took no observation — said his quadrant was out of order ; but the fact was, he himself was constantly drunk. A few rotten plantains were the only eatables on board, and after sixteen days out, all reckoning lost, and the water gone, an American fortunately hove in sight, and took them into Antigua, or else they must have all perished.

It is strange to see the small schooners and cutters which navigate between the Antilles ; many disappear every year, either foundering in squalls, or captured by pirates and slavers. Thus a gentleman told me, that he landed from a schooner, with his servant, at St. Vincent's, leaving all his baggage

on board, and a rich collection of objects of natural history, for he intended merely to speak to a friend and return in an hour or two to the schooner, which lay off and on waiting for him ; a squall came on, the schooner stood out to sea, and has never been heard of to this day—there was a narrow escape !

Fresh blew the breeze as we sighted the lofty and romantic shores of Trinidad ; the captain kept near the land, and from the deck of our little bark we enjoyed a glorious prospect. The mountainous coast was covered with gigantic forest trees, the tropical woods of noble growth descending to meet the waves, where precipices did not fall abruptly into the deep water ; on the right were the blue ridges of Cumana, in South America, and before us were the wooded islands between the mouths of the Dragon, or Boccas, seeing all which, in Oriental phrase, “ caused the goblet of the heart to overflow with the wine of ecstasy.”

We stood for the Bocca Grande, and caught a king-fish (not unlike a salmon) of twelve pounds weight, with a line over the stern ; it was immediately cut up and cooked, and a more delicious morsel I have seldom tasted. Our eyes and mouths feasted with beautiful scenery and savoury morsels ; we rolled under a wall of rocks on the right, and found a strong ripple and powerful current setting against us ; we were between a Scylla and Charybdis, and the danger is imminent if in these dreaded passages the breeze fails. We saw the rock on which a

large ship had lately been broken up, but to us Æolus was favourable—

“ Implevit velis ventisque secundis,”

and we dashed into the clear waters of the gulf of Paria.

In the bay of Chagaramus is a whaling establishment, and here it is usual to see the monsters of the deep majestically ploughing the waves, turning up their black sides to the sun, and spouting water to a great height in the air; here also are frequently witnessed desperate combats between the whale and the thrasher; the latter springing into the air falls with violence on its enormous foe, and belabours it with its tail. The noise of the combatants, and agitation in the sea are very great; the whale dives perpendicularly, and is then said to be attacked by the sword-fish, and again reappearing, the thrasher assails it, till worn out and exhausted in the encounter, it falls a prey to its enemies, and its flesh is devoured.

Low lying and surrounded with an amphitheatre of hills, was Port of Spain, the most imposing and the handsomest city in the West Indies, with tower and spire, and massive stone buildings. Before it lay the shipping and canoes, with white sails, darting amongst the larger vessels. Stretching to the south of the city was the Savannah Grande, of fertility equalled only by that of the plains of Guiana; and as we cast our eyes back to the Bccas, we saw the coast studded with rocky islets.

I sketched the enchanting panorama as we were becalmed for a short time, before we slowly approached the anchorage grounds ; and in the hands of a Claude, the scene might be worked up into a picture of surpassing loveliness. Panoramic views of the Antilles would make the fortune of any painter, and give the English public some idea of the beauty and value of their Occidental possessions, alas ! how decried.

The harbour-master carried me on shore in his boat, and I landed on an excellent pier, beside a battery of cannon, and took up my residence in the suburban villa of the first Alcalde, M. Shine.

Port of Spain is extremely well built, and I was delighted with the regularity of the streets, the public walks shaded with trees, and the neat trottoirs for foot passengers ; but at this time, the month of July, the thermometer was at 90° in the shade, and the refreshing sea breeze was shut out by the picturesque hills to windward.

I drove through the streets with my kind entertainer, and remarked the substantial air of the Spanish houses, so different from the wooden buildings usual in British colonies. Our countrymen visit tropical countries only to accumulate wealth, and return to enjoy it in Old England ; whereas foreigners expatriate themselves entirely, and build for their descendants. The general air of cleanliness about the city said much in favour of its municipal police ; and those public buildings which had been constructed under the eye of a late Gover-

nor, Sir Ralph Woodford, were evidences of his good taste.

We first visited the Protestant church, or cathedral, occupying one side of a square, and built in the gothic style with a lofty square tower. The body of the cathedral is extremely elegant, the great expanse of the roof, unbroken by ailes, is beautifully groined, and the wainscoting, altar, doors, and pews were composed of the rich woods of the island, carved in excellent taste. The draperies were purple, and there were no invidious distinctions between the accommodation for the whites and the coloured people.

“Fleecy locks and dark complexion
 Cannot forfeit Nature’s claim ;
 Skins may differ, but devotion
 Dwells in white and black the same.”

Truly, the coloured women here are uncommonly handsome ; Spanish blood they say amalgamates better than British with African, and really I saw some faces and figures that reminded me of the healthy olive cheeks and cypress waists of the East. Now the brown creoles of the old English islands have not such characteristics, neither do they dress so well ; and I was particular in learning from the fair daughter of the alcalde the fashionable mode of adjusting the saffron and crimson handkerchief, which so well becomes the head of the Trinidad mulattas.

The Catholic church, also of gothic architecture, is a more prominent and beautiful object than the

Protestant, and is very conspicuous from the harbour, with its tower, lofty roof, and pointed windows. Here, under the chancel, are entombed the remains of a bishop who died a short time ago, leaving behind him an unblemished character, and bearing with him to the grave the regrets of all the inhabitants of Port of Spain, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant. Indeed the kindly feeling and absence of all religious animosity which exists among the inhabitants of this island, are highly deserving of praise. Though there was a superb avenue of trees leading up to the entrance of the church, forming a most delightful promenade, it seemed to be at all times deserted, the ladies preferring the roads near the town, and even the hot streets.

I visited the markets, and saw the treasures, in the shape of vegetables and fruits, which are here bestowed in luxurious abundance by a bountiful nature. Plantains and sweet potatoes, okras, yams and teniers were exposed in baskets before brown or black hucksters, sitting under the shade of umbrellas, whilst the eye delighted to wander over the heaps of pomegranates, guavas, shaddocks, oranges, limes, custard-apples, mangoes, pines, and grenadilloes, which could be purchased for very trifling sums.

The butchers had a cool hall immediately opposite the vegetable and fruit market, and it would have pleased those who "hanker after the flesh pots of Egypt," to have witnessed the cleanliness of the stalls and the excellent appearance of the beef and

mutton, of which eight pence per pound was, I believe, the price. Outside, and unmolested, were at least one hundred black vultures, waiting patiently in rows to perform the office of scavengers; like the adjutant of India, their voracity is quite surprising, and they make "no bones" of whatever is thrown them.

When I went out in the morning I had remarked an Indian from the interior sitting on a log and looking towards the sea; in the afternoon I looked again at the log, and lo! there was the self-same day-dreamer sitting in the same spot, and in the same attitude, but his face now turned inland.

Before we take a glance of the environs of Port of Spain let us state to the reader, that from a highly-valued friend, now no more, we derived much information regarding Trinidad; that friend, whose loss we never cease to deplore, was Captain T. Abercrombie Trant of the twenty-eighth regiment, who resided a year on this island. A concise account of the extraordinary career of this young officer, who was cut off at the early age of twenty-seven, will be found in the attractive pages of the *United Service Journal* for April 1832; and here let it suffice to state, that he had served his king and country with honour and reputation in the four quarters of the globe, was favourably known to the public as the author of "*Two Years in Ava*," and the "*Narrative of a Journey in Greece*," and was cut off after protracted sufferings, occasioned by the various trying changes of climate he had under-

gone at a time when the star of his fortune was apparently in the ascendant. But, alas! for youthful anticipations and fond hopes of future success,

“’Tis ever thus, ’tis ever thus, that when the poor heart clings,
With all its finest tendrils, with all its flexile rings,
That goodly thing it cleaveth to, so fondly and so fast,
Is struck to earth by lightning, or shattered by the blast.”

Of the colony of Trinidad, abounding as it does in natural curiosities, with a rich and productive soil, with valleys bounded by the most picturesque and beautiful hills, and those few parts of the island under cultivation indicating its vast capabilities, and how important it may yet become, I could see little in the course of a few days; but my friend supplied my deficiencies; and to him then let the reader ascribe much of the information which is found in the following pages.

Much as the Port of Spain is to be admired, still more does the country around it attract attention; the mountains form a wide semicircle in the background, and between them and the town the intervening level plain is cultivated; the sides of the circular road, for four miles out of town, are diversified with cottage residences and plantations, and in addition to the eternal verdure of the trees, the waving fields of sugar-cane present a bright sheet of green, “whilst the red blossoms of the bois immortal shine like clusters of rubies in a setting of emeralds, and the yellow flowers of the tulip-trees form a dazzling relief to the dark-coloured leaves.”

I drove out to St. Anne’s, the country residence

of the interim-Governor, Sir Charles Smith, R.E. The house is cool and commodious, stands on an elevated plateau commanding a delightful view of the town and gulf of Paria, and is backed by the forest-covered mountains, and surrounded by a botanical garden, in which are rare and valuable plants from distant climes. The nutmeg, cinnamon, and clove there flourish; the banyan and teak, the bread fruit, cocoa, and vanilla, grow on a soil carpeted with delicious lemon grass.

Next I visited the barracks of St. James, two miles from town, in a most beautiful situation, but badly chosen in point of salubrity. The buildings were extremely handsome and substantial, surrounded with iron railings, and behind them was a park, over which waved the feathery leaves of palms; above were wooded hills, and in front was the sea; but near them was a badly-drained swamp, and the cold currents of air from the lovely valley of Maraval, caused great mortality in a wing of the Royal regiment. Though there was a prodigal disbursement of money in the construction of St. James's barracks, yet there is not accommodation for a regiment in them.

I attended divine service with the officers and men of the Royals (among the former I discovered some fellow-students at the Royal Military College), and though I remarked that attention was given to the sermon, I am of opinion that between the tropics, the service of the Church of England would not be the worse for being shortened, for many a

slumbering soldier behind me gave nasal tokens of inattention ; and I have always remarked the same to prevail among negroes. During the prayers they doze, rouse themselves to listen to the sermon, and are always wide awake to accompany the organ with their excellent voices.

Sometimes, but rarely, there are races in front of St. Anne's ; the novelty consequently attracts a great many spectators, and the scene becomes very animated. A stand is erected for the accommodation of the fair sex, and a profusion of bonnets and ribbons, many pretty faces, and neatly turned ankles may be seen crowded within its limits.

At four in the afternoon scarcely a soul remains in town, except the old and the bed-ridden. The merchants shut up their stores (for though here, as in other Western Isles, there are *veritables boutiques*, yet the word shop is unknown), and if single, mount their horses, or if they have a better half, step into a light one-horse chaise, and whirl along the firmly macadamized road to the place of rendezvous. Then the more aristocratic part of the society follow, amidst a crowd of merry, grinning blacks and good-looking coloured girls, with bright flaming fichus tied *à la Française*, and feeling as proud and consequential as the first lady in the land. Even "Beau Nash" closes his retail store, and Reine Maude leaves her throne, whence she is wont to dole out "Epiceries en detail," and proceed to join the spectators.

There being none of the Greek *αλυσται*, or officers

to preserve order and regularity, at the St. Anne's races, when the horses start, with black jockeys in their silken jackets and top boots, what a shout arises from the motley crowd—such an uproar, such anxiety, such betting! men who, one might suppose, possessed nothing but the clothes on them, stake their dollars, joes, and doubloons, and then the eagerness with which the “legs” (to call them black would be invidious), make their bets, and strive to take each other in, is not the least amusing part of the scene. Then in the interval between the heats, some tents where refreshments are sold become the caaba, or point of attraction; and when the rum begins to take effect, and blackey's wit to be excited, many are the jokes, and loud the roars of laughter, one might hear there.

“Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas,”

said a great man, now no more. The justness of the observation must have been acknowledged, when Wellington and Napoleon were seen rolling along in drunken fellowship, whilst Pompey and Cæsar forgot their rivalry, and merrily enjoyed a glass of grog. Nelson, who carried too much sail aloft, fell on his beam ends; and Blucher staggering past, jeeringly pointed at him, and exclaimed, “Hi, Massa! me tink him dam drunk; him black nigger.” There also the forgotten favourite of a queen, Bergami, might be seen,—of course a precious young scamp: innumerable goddesses forsook Olympus, and in the semblance of ebony-

coloured damsels joined in the happy group; Juno, Minerva, and Venus, Diana, Aurora, and Hebe, without any apples of discord, severally honoured the assemblage with their presence; and many English names, which might remind one of

“ Cheeks vying with the blooming rose,
And lips like brightest coral,”

were responded to by ladies having visages as black as coal, noses like saucepans, and mouths from ear to ear. Certainly it is rather annoying to hear names which have been ennobled by the glorious deeds of those who bore them, or which may be endeared to us by recollections of love and affection, thus degraded. There is a full house of peers to be found in any of the Western Isles; and either of the West India regiments contain as many general officers as there are names in the army list; so that those who have earls and viscounts to converse with daily, ought not to complain of their society.

Except on Sundays, and *jours de fêtes*, the Spanish creole women are seldom seen. I was fortunate enough to see a considerable number in white and black mantillas (veils); their appearance was very Castilian, though more languishing, and eyes swimming in love; or, “like hawks, these black-eyed damsels playfully glancing, seized with the talons of their eyelashes, the hearts of helpless lovers in their grasp.” They say, however, that there is less dancing and gaiety now among the

Spanish residents than formerly; that the light guitar is seldom heard accompanying the voice of a lover when serenading his mistress in her bower, or the castanets keeping time to the steps of a bolero or fandango; yet at the period when the people give a loose to their gaiety, at the Carnival, every house in Port of Spain is thrown open, and the authority of Momus universally acknowledged. Groups of masks perambulate the streets at all hours, and as much life and spirit are then shown, as there is listlessness during the previous period of the year.

The races always close with a ball (but race-balls are nowhere select); and those who may have been selling gloves or millinery in the morning, may be seen figuring in the dance in the evening—mere trifles to philosophical travellers.

In riding into the interior of the island, the usual road to take is that leading to the town of St. Joseph, due east of the capital; on the left is a range of hills, and on the right, connected with the Savannah Grande, is an extensive swamp covered with mangrove shrubs, and from whence such a noxious vapour exhales that many of the houses built in its vicinity have been deserted. Very little attention has been paid to the draining of swamps in the West; we hear constantly “the bad climate” talked of, but it is like a man’s feeble constitution being blamed. The fault rests with ourselves only: if no pains are taken to drain salt

marshes, we must expect yellow fever ; if no pains are taken to live judiciously, we cannot expect a green old age.

After the swamp is passed, the country is highly cultivated ; the pretty village of St. Juan is passed ; a fine stream of water crossed, and then the spire of St. Joseph is seen above the cocoa plantations at the entrance of the valley of Maraccas. Gorgeous wild flowers are on the sides of the road, and birds of the richest plumage disport on either hand. The country on the road from St. Joseph's is everywhere cleared, and being well watered by numerous mountain streams, offers great facilities for cultivation ; the clearing of the ground from wood has however been performed with little discrimination, as, not contented with the removal of the brushwood and shrubs which might interfere with agriculture, the planters have also felled those majestic trees, which if left in clumps or groups of four or five, would not only have given the estates the semblance of parks, and not have impeded the progress of cultivation, but would also attract rain, so indispensable for canes.

But everywhere in the New World I made the same remark ; little or no taste is displayed by the clearers of land, every thing is swept off, " root and branch," with remorseless hands ; so that, as in Trinidad, one sees the houses placed in the middle of an uninteresting open space of ground, rendered still more insipid by its contrast with the richness of the wooded mountains which overhang it.

The returns of the soil at Trinidad are so great, that it would seem an easy matter to acquire a large fortune ; but although a planter's outset does not seem to be an arduous undertaking, yet when his situation is minutely enquired into, it will appear to be one of much exertion, and requires a great share of perseverance. Land is here so abundant that the price of an estate is not calculated from the number of acres that it comprises, but from the number of slaves belonging to it, each slave being considered adequate to cultivate and manufacture three, or three and a half hogsheads of sugar.

Thus the primary object is to secure a well-manned estate, since owing to the laws prohibiting the removal of slaves from one island to another, those in Trinidad are too few in number to do justice to the prolific soil, and other natural advantages, which give this island a superiority over our other western colonies.

It is also of great importance to fix upon a part of the island whence the sugar may be transported with ease to the coast ; but these points being settled, that which one might suppose the most difficult to arrange, namely, the payment, is a matter of no importance, as the purchaser, until by his own industry he has cleared off his mortgages, is merely the agent of the former proprietor.

For instance, if an estate is for sale for £20,000, and a person chooses to become the purchaser, it is merely necessary for him to pay as a first instalment £3000 or £4000, which could be borrowed on

the security of the estate; the remainder of the purchase-money would only be required in instalments, at considerable intervals; and as an estate of this value would produce £2000 a-year, it may be easily understood, that by constant industry and economy a man may, in the course of time, clear off his incumbrances and become independent. There are instances of people having purchased estates without possessing any capital with which to commence, and by judicious management and fortunate seasons have secured an unincumbered property in seven years; but these examples are not of frequent occurrence, and for one estate that is out of debt there are a dozen that are mortgaged.

These remarks are solely applicable to the sugar estates, the cocoa plantations being now of no value; hence the depressed state of the poor Spaniards, who principally cultivated this pleasant fruit. Cocoa, many years since, was the staple commodity of the island, but a short-sighted policy induced the planters to introduce an inferior description of that plant, because more productive; and the South American estates having been laid waste by the contending parties during the revolutionary war, they found no difficulty in disposing of it.

But when the peace enabled the Columbians to attend to the cultivation of their estates, the superiority of their cocoa was universally acknowledged, and the result was that the Trinidad planters, who had been in the habit of selling their cocoa at thirty

dollars the hundredweight, could no longer find a mart for their produce, and now would be glad to obtain for the best cocoa four dollars a fanega, or one hundred and ten pounds; they are therefore poor people, mostly ruined. Some are cutting down their beautiful cocoa plantations, "those aromatic shades," in order to plant canes; while others allow the cocoa groves to run wild, and employ their slaves on other estates in cultivating sugar.

Captain Trant, who lived several months at St. Joseph's, (seven miles from Port of Spain, now containing about a hundred houses, though formerly the capital, and plundered by Sir Walter Raleigh,) gave a very favourable account of the climate, the thermometer being four or five degrees below that at the modern capital; during the day a refreshing breeze prevailed, which reduced the heat to the temperature of a summer's day in England. Certainly one was not prepared to meet with so fine a climate in the West Indies.

We hear so much of the mortality which is supposed to take place in the West Indies, that they are viewed in the worst possible light, and many suppose when their relatives and friends embark for these islands, that they are preparing to encounter certain death; they are pitied for their impending fate, and praised for the fortitude they evince in not shrinking from the trial; and perhaps these very people may live much longer and enjoy better health than those they are leaving.

The fact is, that at least two thirds of the deaths are brought on by imprudence; and if one lives in a quiet moderate way, without absolutely avoiding or seeking exposure to the sun, there is little doubt but that a man may live in the West Indies for many years (at a distance from swamps), without their proving the Golgotha they are said to be.

The climate there is decidedly superior to that of Bengal; in the latter, if a person were to take exercise at noon in the sun, without a thick turban on, or (what I particularly dislike) an umbrella over his head, a fever would be the inevitable consequence; whereas in the West the sun is comparatively harmless. Observe also the personal appearance of those who have resided for many years in the two climates; the East Indians are (many of them) sallow, withered, and emaciated, while the West Indians, on the contrary, still appear to retain the vigour of their European constitutions (though of course not altogether unimpaired), and seem much fresher and healthier than their eastern brethren.

In fatal diseases the two countries are much on a par; the East is scourged with the cholera, while in the West the yellow fever leaves few who can boast of having recovered when once attacked. I saw several cases of that terrible disease, the leprosy, at Trinidad; English, French, and Spaniards, had it in their families introduced by black women; parents had been careless as to whom they

selected as nurses, and the consequences were very painful to witness.

“ ‘ Room for the leper,’ and aside they stood,
Matron and child, and pitiless manhood—all
Who met him on his way, and let him pass,
And he went forth alone ; not one of all
The many whom he loved, nor she whose name
Was woven in the fibres of the heart,
Breaking within him now, to come and speak
Comfort unto him. Yea, he went his way,
Sick and broken-hearted, and alone to die,
For God hath cursed the leper.”

CHAPTER XIV.

The British Government judiciously preserves the Laws of conquered Colonies.—The Government of Trinidad.—The Cabildo.—Inhabitants wish a Representative Government.—The Commandants of Districts.—Population of the Island.—Governors of Colonies might take an example from Sir Ralph Woodford.—The Valley of Maraccas.—The River St. Joseph.—A Tropical scene.—Free Blacks.—The Falls of Maraccas.—The Village of Arima.—An Indian Settlement.—Indian Cottages.—The Red Men.—Their appearance.—Character and habits.—Schools.—Trinidad Indians have no traditions.—Here as elsewhere their numbers are diminishing.—Change of system again recommended.—The Pitch Lake.—Its Islands.—Singular effect of standing on the pitch.—Experiments.—Mud Volcanoes.—Similarities between Crim Tartary and Trinidad.—The Bois immortel.—A Spicy Grove and Tropical Residence.—Strange instance of delicacy in a Creole.—The Trinidad Militia.—Fort St. George.—Defence of the Island criticized.—Trinidad too valuable to be sacrificed.

THE British government, with great judgment, has preserved the laws, as they respect private property, in the colonies conquered in the West. The Spanish laws of Trinidad still remain with some modification, and by them almost despotic power is vested in the Governor, who is aided by a council of his own nomination. In addition to the council, a corporate body of considerable influence, called

the cabildo, exists in Port of Spain ; it is selected from among the most respectable inhabitants of the island, who when they retire at the end of the year, nominate their own successors.

The cabildo has an income of £12,000 *per annum*, which is dedicated to the erection of public works, and to pay the salaries of the executive officers. Though not possessed of the same power as the representative assemblies of other islands, the cabildo can, notwithstanding, act with great independence ; but the power of taxing *ad libitum*, rests with the Governor. Arbitrary power is, in fact, essentially necessary in an infant colony, composed as it is of people of various nations, and comprising many desperate adventurers and outlaws.

It is true that the educated and enlightened part of the community are extremely desirous of a representative government ; but although it might prove personally beneficial to them, as throwing the power of taxation into their hands, yet at present it would but embarrass and tie up the power of the Governor, and prevent his enforcing acts which, by consolidating the executive power, tend to prevent the jarring of various interests, and by embracing only the ultimate benefit of the island, would enable it in a few years to emerge from its present depressed state, and assume the important station in the West, that its geographical situation, prolific soil, and favourable climate, entitle it to hold.

Trinidad, next to Jamaica, will be the most valuable island appanage of the British crown ;

but to aid its rise, the person at the head of the government should be of a firm and decided character, one who will not allow himself to be biassed by the murmurs of the discontented, or influenced by the interested advice of favourites.

Another powerful reason against the establishment of a popular assembly is, that from the circumstance of there being at present but few resident gentry in the island (the object of all those who now reside on their estates being to return to England when their exertions are repaid by a sufficient income), it is natural to suppose that those measures from which only a distant benefit would be derived, would meet with the disapprobation of legislators, whereas those calculated to afford immediate relief, though at the expense of a great loss hereafter, would be joyfully acceded to, as the *onus* would fall on their successors.

In conformity with the Spanish form of government at Trinidad, the terms *Alcalde*, *Algacil*, &c. are always used instead of their corresponding names in English. The inland division of the island is also regulated according to the old system, and is portioned into districts under the superintendence of commandants, whose office is to keep the peace, punish refractory slaves, secure marauders, and so on—but their power is very limited.

The population of Trinidad is yearly increasing, and is now estimated at five thousand whites, six-

teen thousand people of colour, and only twenty-two thousand slaves, which form an average of nine souls to a square mile, the island being seventy miles long and as many broad. The proportion of white males to females, is as two to one ; but the females of the negro race exceed the males by one hundred. Field labourers are so scarce in Trinidad, that I was told of hundreds of hogsheads of sugar absolutely rotting on the ground for want of hands to cut the canes.

Governors of colonies, besides superintending and administering the government entrusted to their charge, may render great benefit by ameliorating the state of society, and setting an example of liberality without extravagance ; and by urbanity and polish of manner, may throw a brilliancy over the circle in which they preside, and above all, place the members of it on good terms with each other.

In the days of Sir R. Woodford there were none of our western colonies which could boast of a gayer or more agreeable society than Trinidad ; he had raised a social structure with great judgment and foresight. The fair delighted in St. Anne's, as the place where happy moments might be passed with gay Lotharios in the mazy dance ; the young men, in conversing with Sir Ralph, derived both amusement and instruction from his remarks ; whilst the elder rejoiced in the choice wines and excellent dinners which graced the Governor's hospitable

board. He encouraged theatrical amusements, and mirth and festivity pervaded his halls.

Let us now make another excursion into the interior. In the recesses of the Valley of Maraccas there is a most magnificent waterfall; and in riding up the valley, it is impossible for the wanderer to suppress his exclamations of delight. Beautiful shrubs in full blossom hang over the sparkling stream of the St. Joseph, and blending their perfumes with that of the acacia, refresh the sense, "like a garden of perfect beauty and fragrance, in which the cypress and cedar grow side by side, and the lily and the rose, like a bride and bridegroom, recline on each other's bosom." Then the larger trees, bending low their boughs over the river, for awhile conceal it from the sight (though it can still be heard rushing over its rocky bed), or form here and there a rustic bower, inviting to repose in its cool shade; above on either side is a lofty mountain, which hemming the river in, causes it to meander and wind like the coil of a serpent; eight times it is forded in less than four miles.

Animated nature likewise adds to the interest of the scene. Numberless humming-birds flit from bough to bough; at one moment darting across the path, and the next balancing themselves in the air close to a flower from whence they seek to extract the insects or the sweets, and agitating their wings with such rapidity as to render them invisible.

“ While richest roses though in crimson drest,
Shrink from the splendour of their gorgeous breast.”

Afar in the forest is heard the barking of the large beaked toucans, the scream of the parroquet, and the wailings of the goat-sucker ; butterflies of all sizes, and of all colours of the rainbow, skim around ; lizards of an emerald green run across the road, or lie basking in the sun ; and snakes, startled at the approach of human feet, retreat with rustling noise into the grass on the way-side.

At the eighth ford of the river there is a clump of the most beautiful bamboos, and so regularly have they by chance sprung up, that the stems seem to form the clustered columns, and the weeping branches and leaves the arches, of a graceful gothic edifice. Here, after the exercise of walking and shooting among the hills, the luxury of a bath may be enjoyed, and after it a rural repast.

Beyond this the valley becomes wider, and forms a basin, shut round by the mountains ; and here, in different directions, are observed some small houses and plantations, delightfully situated on the slope of the hills. The high road is now left, and a mountain path is ascended for a couple of miles, having on one side a steep declivity, and on the other a lofty mountain ; here the ground has been partially cleared by some free black settlers. On looking to the steep in front, the cascade will now be seen, falling in a perpendicular line from the mountain into the valley. The trees again shut it from the view ; but from the first glimpse the

lover of nature will feel assured that he will be amply recompensed in the end. It is now necessary to proceed onwards on foot, along a narrow path, with a precipice below, and amongst wild scenery; at last, on emerging from a thick wood, the traveller finds himself at the bottom of the fall.

The precipice over which it rolls is two hundred and eighty feet high, and the trees which grow on the summit of this, have the semblance from below of mere shrubs, and from the crevices of the rock which forms the cliff, various shrubs and flowers project, and afford a support to the festoons of parasitical plants which fall from above them. At the very highest part of the cliff the water rushes from under the trees, over a ledge of rock, and falls in an unbroken stream about two-thirds of the way, where it breaks into spray, and forms rainbows in the sunbeams.

So perpendicular is the precipice, that one may walk up to its base, and then on gazing upwards, the overhanging rocks seem threatening to escape from their beds, and in falling down, to crush one to atoms. Earthquakes (here of no uncommon occurrence, though Trinidad is free from hurricanes,) have detached large masses of the precipice, which lie scattered in the bed of the torrent, where also may be seen the mangled remains of water-fowl and snakes. Near the cascade stands a tree which has been used as an album by former visitors to the fall, and on its venerable trunk are inscribed names

and dates as far back as 1802. Pineapples and other fruits may be here enjoyed, as the mulattoes in the neighbourhood pay attention to gardening.

Few of the residents in the island have seen the waterfall of Maraccas. Sir. R. Woodford first caused the path to be cut which leads to it; and before his time it was comparatively little known. In a country which contains such magnificent scenery as Trinidad, it is not unlikely but that there may be other scenes similar in their general character, but there can be none equal in grandeur to the vale of Maraccas.

“ It seems the seat of pure delight,
A paradise or faery land.”

In the village of Arima, in the interior, a settlement of Aboriginal Indians has been formed, under the auspices of the British Government. There, are assembled a remnant of that unfortunate race, who only three centuries since were the quiet and undisputed possessors of this portion of the Western hemisphere, but whose history since that period has been one uninterrupted tale of oppression, misery, and despair, and who now are so rapidly decreasing in numbers, that ere another century elapses, they will in all probability be entirely swept from the face of the earth.

Arima is ten miles inland from St. Joseph's, and the road to it is agreeably diversified with plantations, comfortable houses, savannahs, and forest scenery. Several fine mountain streams rush across it, and on viewing the great capabilities of the soil,

and the abundance of water, one cannot but regret that the dearth of inhabitants should condemn the greatest part of this island, to remain in its original state of wildness.

In the centre of Arima is a square, on one side of which is a church, which much resembles a barn ; beside this is the house of the curate, and opposite is a thatched house, called the Casa Real, for the accommodation of the Governor, when his Excellency visits the settlement : a few Indian cottages form the other two sides of the square. The other huts of the inhabitants are on two sides of a broad street, on which the grass grows luxuriantly, trodden down in one narrow path only.

The interior of the Indian habitations is neat and comfortable. The inmates are of low stature ; and although the women are very delicately formed, the men are stout and robust. They have the usual long and black silky hair, and their features, which strongly resemble those of the Malays or Tartars, are dull and apathetic. When not at work in their small fields, or in the forest, they always appear, like Turks at the doors of their coffee-shops, to be engaged in deep thought, although, in fact, their mind is quite unoccupied ; and in a torpid state would they pass their lives, unless excited by hunger or some other cause. Nature has endowed them with an inertness of disposition, which at first seems quite incompatible with a savage state, but which is removed, when they are partly civilized, like those at Arima ; there they can

be made to exert themselves; there they are well dressed, and in some of their houses there is furniture of a superior description; indeed, one man, of the name of Bravo, built himself a very comfortable residence, and by his assiduous attention to the cultivation of cocoa at a time when it was in great demand, he derived from it an annual income of £350.

Unfortunately the Indians of Arima have acquired such habits of drunkenness that it is impossible to persuade them to refrain from the use of ardent spirits; and the pernicious extent to which they carry this vice is of course considered one of the reasons why they rapidly diminish in number. The descendants of the whites who taught them this fatal propensity, should labour hard to teach them temperance. These Indians also neglect their children until they attain the age of ten or twelve years, and then they only take care of them in order that they may be assisted in their labours. But although the parents pay but little attention to the welfare of their offspring, the government of the island watches over them with a careful eye; and the state of the schools does the worthy Padre infinite credit. Both boys and girls are instructed in reading and writing, Spanish, and in the principles of the Catholic religion. The boys' school-room is whimsically enough divided into Roma and Carthago, and beneath these names, which are painted on the opposite walls over each class, is the figure of a jackass, which when the one

class excels the other in its conduct is turned to the wall, whilst the stupid set have their emblem fully displayed. The Padre is a great favourite with his young charge, and also with their parents, and was one of those who fled from Old Spain to England, to avoid the persecutions of the petticoat embroiderer, Ferdinand.

There are about two hundred Indians at Arima, and nearly four hundred more in the other settlements; but of these the males form the largest proportion, and, strange to say, those of Arima have lost all traces of their own language and only speak Spanish. They likewise retain none of the traditions of their forefathers, and have no idea when the Europeans arrived in the New World, still less are they aware that the whole island was formerly theirs; their little world is now limited to Arima, where a considerable tract of land has been secured to them in perpetuity. The present station which these poor people hold in the civilized world is owing to the judicious liberality of the British Government, and more especially to the interest which the late Sir Ralph Woodford took in ameliorating their condition. Truly this excellent Governor is most deserving of a statue, if ever a public benefactor deserved one.

The Indians of the other three missions are not at present so well cared for as those of Arima, and are more frequently seen with the fig-leaf than in decent attire. During the Spanish misrule the Indians were viewed in the light of beings devoted

to the service of the whites ; no pains were taken to rescue them from their barbarism ; they were over-worked, ill-treated, and the slaves of their oppressors, so that death to an unfortunate Indian was a welcome release from misery.

Now that they are independent, enjoying all the comforts of life, and possessing every facility for acquiring a limited education, the Indians, it might be expected, would shake off those indolent and depressed habits, which, though natural to them, may have been increased by their state of debasement during the last three centuries. But such is not the opinion of those who ought to be well acquainted with them ; their speedy extinction is foretold by all, and it would almost seem, say they, as if the Almighty had ordained that a race of beings, possessing so few of the energies of man, should gradually recede before the colonists of the old world, until at last none are left, and the continent of America become peopled with men calculated to avail themselves of its vast resources.

I say now, as I said formerly, that a proper plan has not been pursued with these unfortunate red-men. What miracles have not temperance societies accomplished in our own country, and in the United States ! and why not hold out to the aboriginal American the inducement of an office of trust, if he conducts himself properly and fits himself for it ? Cold-blooded and avaricious men may say that the Indians are incapable of improvement ; what were the Peruvians, the children of the sun, before they

fell before their remorseless invaders? What were the Mexicans, with their magnificent temples and palaces, before they were, like stricken deer, scattered to the four winds? What says the Indian lament?

“I will weep for a season, on bitterness fed,
For my kindred are gone to the hills of the dead;
But they died not of hunger, or lingering decay,
The steel of the white man hath swept them away.”

One of the greatest natural curiosities in the world is a lake of asphaltum, or pitch, in Trinidad, situated about thirty-six miles to the southward of Port of Spain. The western shore of the island, for about twenty miles, is quite flat, and richly wooded; and though only one or two houses are perceptible from the sea, the interior is well cultivated, and several small rivers, which empty themselves into the gulf of Paria, afford great facilities for the transport of sugar to the ships which anchor off their embouchures. As Naparima is approached, and the singular mountain (at the foot of which San Fernandez is situated) is plainly distinguished, the shore assumes a more smiling aspect; here one sees a noble forest, there a sheet of bright green points out a cane-field. Cocoa-nut and palm trees are sprinkled over the landscape, and gently wave their feathered foliage; now and then a well-built house appears close to the water's edge, with a verdant lawn extending from it to the sea, and the ground sometimes broken into sinuosities, and then slightly undulating. The beauty of

this part of Trinidad is very great, though from some undrained swamps poisonous malaria exhales.

At Point La Braye are seen masses of pitch, which look like black rocks among the foliage. At the small hamlet of La Braye a considerable extent of coast is covered with pitch, which runs a long way out to sea, and forms a bank under water. The pitch lake is situated on the side of a hill, eighty feet above the level of the sea, from which it is distant three quarters of a mile ; a gradual ascent leads to it, which is covered with pitch in a hardened state, and trees and vegetation flourish upon it.

The road leading to the lake runs through a wood, and on emerging from it the spectator stands on the borders of what at a first glance appears to be a lake, containing many wooded islets, but which on a second examination proves to be a sheet of asphaltum, intersected throughout by crevices three or four feet deep and full of water. The pitch at the sides of the lake is perfectly hard and cold, but as one walks towards the middle, with the shoes off in order to wade through the water, the heat gradually increases, the pitch becomes softer and softer, until at last it is seen boiling up in a liquid state, and the soles of the feet become so heated that it is necessary to dance up and down in a ridiculous manner. The air is then strongly impregnated with bitumen and sulphur, and as one moves along the impression of the feet remain in the surface of the pitch.

During the rainy season, it is possible to walk over the whole lake nearly, but in the hot season a great part is not to be approached. Although several attempts have been made to ascertain the depth of the pitch, no bottom has ever been found. The lake is about a mile and a half in circumference; and not the least extraordinary circumstance is, that it should contain eight or ten small islands, on which trees are growing close to the boiling pitch.

In standing still on the lake near the centre for some time, the surface gradually sinks, till it forms a great bowl as it were, and when the shoulders are level with the general surface of the lake, it is high time to get out. Some time ago, a ship of war landed casks to fill with the pitch, for the purpose of transporting it to England; the casks were rolled on the lake, and the hands commenced filling, but a piratical-looking craft appearing in the offing, the frigate and all hands went in chase—on returning to the lake, all the casks had sunk and disappeared.

The first alcalde presented me with a metallic substance, thrown up by the pitch fountains, which I have submitted for analysis; it much resembles copper ore. Science is at a loss how to account for such an extraordinary phenomenon as this pitch lake, for it does not seem to occupy the mouth of an exhausted crater, neither is the hill on which it is situated of volcanic origin, for its basis is clay.

The flow of pitch from the lake has been immense, the whole country around, except near the Bay of Grapo which is protected by a hill, being covered with it, and it seems singular that no eruption has taken place within the memory of man, although the principle of motion still exists in the centre of the lake. The appearance of the pitch which had hardened, is as if the whole surface had boiled up into large bubbles, and then suddenly cooled ; but where the asphaltum is still liquid, the surface is perfectly smooth.

Many experiments have been made for the purpose of ascertaining whether the pitch could be applied to any useful purpose. Admiral Cochrane, who was possessed of the enterprising and speculative genius of his family, sent two ship-loads of it to England, but after a variety of experiments, it was ascertained, that in order to render the asphaltum fit for use, it was necessary to mix such a quantity of oil with it, that the expense of the oil alone would more than exceed the price of pitch in England. A second attempt was made by a company styled the Pitch Company, who sent out an agent from England, but finding that Admiral Cochrane had failed, and being convinced that any further attempt would be useless, he let the matter drop.

Forty miles to the southward of the Pitch Lake is Point du Cac, which forms the south-west extremity of the island, and one side of the Boca del Sierpe ; on this cape is another natural curiosity,

which is well worth seeing, although the distance from Port of Spain renders it rather a difficult operation to proceed thither. What renders this point so interesting to the stranger, is an assemblage of mud volcanoes, of which the largest may be about one hundred and fifty feet in diameter. They are situated in a plain, and are not more than four feet elevated above the surface of the ground, but within the mouth of the crater, boiling mud is constantly bubbling up; at times, the old craters cease to act, but when that is the case, new ones invariably appear in the vicinity; the mud is fathomless, yet does not overflow, but remains within the circumference of the crater. From what I recollect of the Crimea, I should say that there are remarkable similarities between it and Trinidad, geologically speaking: in both there are mud volcanoes; in both there are bituminous lakes; and both have been frequently visited with earthquakes.

One of the most beautiful of the trees in Trinidad, is the *Bois immortel*, which at certain seasons of the year is covered with clusters of scarlet blossoms of exceeding brightness, and which when shining in the sunbeams, look like a mantle of brilliant velvet. The tree is very lofty and umbrageous, and serves as a screen to the cocoa plant, which being of too delicate a nature to bear exposure to the sun, is always planted under the shelter of the *Bois immortel*. This double wood has a very pleasing effect, especially when the cocoa

is bearing fruit, when its various colours are beautiful. The hedges of the cocoa plantations are usually formed of the coffee bush, intermingled with the lime and bitter orange trees, which when in blossom, breathe perfumes as if—

“ Where some rich caravan not long before
Had passed, with cassia fraught and balmy store ;”

whilst amidst the herbage beneath, one sees bursting forth some of the rarest and most valuable bulbs and shrubs, which in England would be tended with the greatest care in the forced atmosphere of a hot-house. Place beside this delicious grove the long, cool, but lonely residence of the proprietor, perhaps a veteran of Austerlitz, or a noble Castilian, and let it be shaded by mango and silk cotton trees, with graceful palms, and the bamboo, which though in size far less than those with which the Burmans used to construct their formidable stockades in the forests of Pegu, yet still is incomparably beautiful, waving gently its weeping branches with the slightest breath of air; and there will be found a retreat, perhaps, called “ Mon repos,” or “ Mon desir,” and as sweet as that of Paul and Virginia, in view of the mountain of the Three Peaks.

Pause for one instant in the garden, and gaze with wonder on the butterfly plant; nothing can more resemble that lovely insect than the blossom which bears its name; attached by a slender and almost invisible stalk, it has the appearance of flut-

tering in the air ; you fancy you can distinguish the double wings, and the long stamina are the antennæ of a brilliant butterfly.

Some fastidious people think that the Spanish and French girls of the second class in Trinidad are not particularly attractive ; they are certainly darker than our people, but for my part, from having been accustomed to it early in life, I prefer a healthy olive countenance to one “ sicklied over with a pale cast,” from unwonted exposure to tropical heats. The damsels before mentioned are said to have a listless and insipid manner, with no great delicacy, and a gentleman recounts this singular circumstance in proof of it. He was riding through the town of St. Joseph’s, when, on passing a house at the door of which a French creole was standing, he observed that she was suckling some extraordinary sort of being, so unlike a child, that he rode up to her in order to ascertain what it might be, and great was his astonishment, when on approaching nearer, he ascertained that the supposed child was an ugly little pup. “ *Le pauvre petit,*” said she, “ *sa maman vient de mourir, et je l’allaité.*” He then naturally inquired whether she had lost her own baby, and she replied—“ *Oh ! que non, Monsieur, l’enfant est là bas.*” This was certainly throwing away the milk of human kindness with a vengeance.

I attended a review of the Trinidad militia, and really their appearance on the great plain before St. Anne’s was very respectable ; every freeman on

the island is enrolled in the militia, which is composed of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, with a very numerous staff. I was certainly rather astonished at the great display of lace embroidery and Saxon plumes, and I thought that a plain bush-ranger's frock would have been much more appropriate ; still, plumes, epaulettes, and scarlet please the ladies, and that is a great point gained.

I saw adjutants-general and quarter-masters-general, aides-de-camp, paymasters, doctors, and commissioners without number ; each regiment of infantry had its peculiar uniform, but above all the St. Anne's hussars shone conspicuous. The King's must have borrowed their new uniform from the St. Anne's, for they wore light blue jackets and trowsers richly braided, with scarlet pelisses.

The Trinidad militia is about four thousand five hundred strong, and is in a more effective state than that of the other islands ; but the period of assembling for exercise (which formerly took place once a month) having been made quarterly, it is supposed that its discipline may become more lax. The titles of the island military are not quite so grand here as at Barbadoes, where there are lieutenant and major-generals, royal horse and foot guards. Colonel is the most exalted rank in Trinidad, and there is no household brigade.

One forenoon I started with Captain M'Nicol, of the Royals (who for twenty years had enjoyed uninterrupted good health in the West Indies), to visit Fort George, commanding one of the most

beautiful views in the island ; it is three miles from the Port of Spain. We passed Cocoreet, where the ordnance stores are kept, a swampy unhealthy spot ; and then ascended a hill on horseback, but were soon obliged to dismount, for trees had fallen across the road from a late gale, and we scrambled up on foot. We called at the huts of several negro pensioners of the West India regiments ; they seemed to be quite happy with their “ frows,” patch of cassava ground, and plantains. I remarked beautiful fern trees on the way up, and the rare “ *petrea volubilis*,” with its blue garlands, amongst which the whiskered humming bird flitted ; at last, after a long and steep climb, the blockhouse of Fort George was reached, in which was a signal-master and a few black soldiers.

In looking out from the blockhouse, I certainly have seldom seen such a glorious prospect ; on the left was the capital of Trinidad, and the ultramarine waters of the Gulf of Paria, with a few white sails in the distance. The mountains of Cumana, South America, were in front, and then sweeping the eye along the horizon to the right, the Boccas, with cape, headland and island sinnumerable ; immediately below was the valley of Diego Martin, extending across the island to the Atlantic, with overhanging woods and cultivated fields.

“ While on his noontide couch in heavy sleep,
Outstretched the interminable ocean lay,
Waveless and windless.”

Fort George is an example of the manner in which great sums of money are sometimes lavished on useless fortifications ; here battery on battery rise in succession from the shores of the gulf to the barracks, twelve hundred feet above the level of the sea ; and although it would be a difficult matter to storm the hill, yet what the use would be of stationing a body of men there, leaving the capital, three miles off, and the whole country open, is incomprehensible to every one, except perhaps to the officer who projected the works.

Fort George commands but one pass where the road leads to the valley of Diego Martin ; all the other entrances to the interior of the country are undefended, and Port of Spain is quite open. An enemy, therefore, by leaving a corps of observation near Fort George, might tranquilly take possession of the island, and soon starve out the besieged troops. On the south side of the capital Sir Thomas Picton erected a blockhouse, which commanded the town, and might have been serviceable in case of an insurrection ; but now it has fallen into decay, and goes by the name of Picton's Folly. In the event of an attack, if the town is not better defended than it is at present, it ought to be abandoned, and the defence limited to the defiles and passes leading in-land ; a few temporary entrenchments thrown across there, the woods well lined with marksmen, and a disposable body of men to defend any point threatened, would render the conquest of this invaluable island no easy task.

For the greater efficiency of Colonial troops, I wish they could be persuaded to lay aside their hussar jackets and scarlet swallow-tailed coats, and substitute a sad-coloured rifle-dress, with snake and water-proof leather leggings, and amuse themselves with ball practice more than they do.

CHAPTER XV.

Sail from Trinidad.—Mackworth's Island.—The Bay of Chagaramus.—A Flower in the Wilderness.—The Diablotin.—The Umbrella Passage.—An accident.—Grenada.—Sunrise between the Tropics.—St. George Town and Forts.—Negro Fishermen.—Forbearance of Grenada sharks.—The Grand Etang.—The expedition of the Count D'Estaing.—Negro Washerwomen.—A mountain ride.—The scenery at the Grand Etang.—Massacre of the Caribs.—A French Planter.—Fruits.—English Colonists compared with those of other nations.—A change in West Indian society.—Sangaree.—Effects of Intemperance.—West Indians obliged to live on their estates.—Refinements.—A ride through St. George Town.—Richmond Heights.—The Military.—Impressions of service in the West.—Officers ought to make the most of every quarter.—Some officers become Creolized.—Service in the East and West compared.—A rhapsody.

AGAIN embarked in a schooner, I bade adieu to the lofty mountains and smiling plains, romantic valleys, and magnificent forests of Trinidad, and to Port of Spain, with its pleasant residences, and beautiful women therein reclining, and stood away towards the Boccas. As I stood on the deck and gazed on the glorious scene, I felt grateful that I had been permitted to see this favoured land; and as the breeze impelled us from the shore, and the outlines of the mountains became fainter, I might have said in the words of the song,

“ Absence will but make thee dearer,
Isle of Beauty, fare thee well !”

We passed by an island retreat belonging to Lieutenant Mackworth of the navy, a neat casa shaded with trees, and where (as before all the sea-side residences of naval officers) there was a flag-staff and some small pieces of artillery.

We then sailed through the noble bay of Chagaramus, under whose wave lie the remains of the Spanish fleet burnt by Admiral Apodaca, to prevent its falling into the hands of the captors of the island, under the great Sir Ralph Abercromby. On shore we saw a solitary house in a green vale, and the captain (Creitchlow) pointing to it said, "The handsomest woman I ever saw in my life lives there, Signorita Matheson; her father a Scotchman, her mother a Spaniard; and there she must live and bloom unseen,

‘ And waste her sweetness on the desert air;’

unless some one, like the eagle of Sinbad, adventures to bring her to light as a gem hidden in the deep recesses of a Golconda.

The gulf of Paria, near the Boccas is full of small rocky islets, and some of these contain extraordinary caves of great size, in which are to be found a curious bird called the diablotin, which, if eaten when taken from the nest, is pronounced by epicures to be unrivalled, and by good Catholics to be fit food for fasting-days, inasmuch as feeding upon fish it is made of fish, and being fish is no longer fowl!

We saw on the right the old pirate haunts, the

deep and concealed bays, and reached the Umbrella Bocca with a lively breeze. High and frowning precipices were on either hand, the singular rock was before us from whence the passage derives its name, and we went staggering on whilst the sea rushed and roared through the strait, and dashed high upon the cliffs, threatening instant destruction to the frail bark if the wind should fail us.

A sudden squall with dashing rain came on whilst we were in the midst of the wildly agitated water, and as we had only a crew of two or three men on board, I slipped on as usual my pea-jacket and nor'wester hat, to lend a hand in working out of our dangerous situation. But I found the saying confirmed, that none pass the Boccas without having cause to remember them, for in making a short tack the main boom got adrift and struck me down on the deck and nearly overboard, into a sea rushing like a mill-race between black rocks, and abounding in sharks and baracoutas. My left leg, which I thought at first was broken, was seriously bruised and swelled, and I was lame for some time after, but shampooing set all to rights again. "Many a narrow escape we've had from old Chelsea and a timber toe."

We steered for Grenada, that gem of ocean, with its azure sky, cloud capped mountains, and verdant slopes, and were not long before we dropped anchor at St. George Town on a still evening in July. Some talk with rapture of a sunset in these latitudes, and certainly the great luminary descends to

his cool bed most majestically. His risings too in certain situations is sublime : thus at Grenada, on coming on deck before it was light, the island appeared like a mighty wall against the grey horizon, and the clouds which floated round the highest ridges were as black as the smoke from some dreadful conflagration, reminding one of the mountain of adamant of the Arabian Nights, towards which luckless vessels were irresistibly impelled. Gradually a light rosy tint overspread the horizon, and threw the outlines of the island still more into relief ; this was succeeded by a yellowish tinge, then purple, and now the light shone upon the edges of the clouds, and a flash of fire from a height, followed by the report of a gun, warned us that daylight was only first perceptible on shore, although we had seen it for some time. By degrees the scene lighted up, and through a break in the mountain a blood-red ray darted from the as yet invisible sun ; soon however we were prepared for his appearance by the bright light which rose behind the dark summits, and then he burst forth in the full glories of his splendour, revealing a scene of purely Italian character.

A town of white and gay-looking houses occupied a rocky peninsula, which projected into a clear bay ; the spire of a church rose on the isthmus, and Fort George and Hospital Fort, with flag-staffs, in which were displayed waving signals, looked down on the harbour from their commanding heights : behind a point the carenage was

occupied by merchantmen, sheltered from every wind, though hurricanes in Grenada are unknown. The fortifications of Richmond Heights, far above and beyond the town, occupied the upper ground in the picture. In the country, on the slopes of the hills, were orange groves and palm trees, plantations and cultivated fields, mound and dale, through which streams rushed to the sea.

I landed on a pebbly strand, and took up my residence with the Honourable Mr. Hoyer, close to the beach. There the negro fishermen were drawing a long fishing-net lazily and listlessly; two canoes were beyond the centre of the semicircle which it made in the sea, and accompanied it to the shore, whilst black boys swam round it, lifted it as it was occasionally impeded by the stones at the bottom, and splashed the water and shouted, with the idea of frightening the fish and preventing them making their escape. Here, as elsewhere in the Antilles,

“ Each creek and bay
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish glide under the green wave,
’Mongst coral stray, or, sporting with quick glance,
Shew to the sun their wav’d coats dropt with gold.”

“ No fear of sharks here?” I asked. “ No, massa, shark neber eat him negger here.”—“ I should not like to trust them.”—“ No, massa, neber touch negro Grenada; two tree day gone, two negger capsized in canoe with plenty fish; two shark come eat up all de fish, negger quite safe.” Very curious, if true, as they say in the States.

The great attraction in Grenada is the Grand Etang, or lake, on the summit of a mountain, apparently an extinct volcano. A pleasant-tempered and handsome young Irishman, Captain Otway, of the Island Rangers, agreed to accompany me to visit this "Lion;" so we mounted at six in the morning, and rode out of town. We passed under the hospital hill, where the British under Lord Macartney made such a noble defence against the expedition of the Count D'Estaing, in 1779—five hundred of the former for some time resisting the efforts of five thousand of the latter, with twenty-five ships of the line, and ten frigates;—but at last, after considerable loss on the part of the enemy, the island was surrendered to the French.

We rode through the well-supplied fish market, and then up the Vale of Tempe, with its picturesque cotton-tree and brawling stream. The scene was very lively, for dozens of negro washerwomen were up to their knees in the water, and beating the clothes against the rocks on the bank, to the no small injury of the raiment, though thereby their handiwork is beautifully white, and is afterwards skilfully ironed. In a similar manner do the Oriental dhobeas belabour the stones with apparel, giving vent at the same time to a heavy sigh, like a paviour at each stroke of his rammer.

As we rode past the sable *blanchisseuses*, they laughed and joked with us. "What for massa leave missus so early in marning?" Alas! I had

no wife to leave ; for well has the Persian poet said—

“ Is all thy day uneasy, be not afflicted
Should thou at night have a sympathiser in thy bosom.”

We passed over wild paths, and then wound round a steep hill with a precipice of two hundred feet on the left, at the bottom of which was a river concealed by heavy foliage, and every moment we were called on to admire the rich parasitical plants, and ferns, and plantains growing wild. We watered our horses at a beautiful secluded nook, through which a clear and cold stream ran, overhung with noble trees ; and after a long ascent found ourselves on Table Land, passing between two rows of huts, tenanted by the negro Rangers, and breakfasted in the airy dwelling of their Commandant.

We then wandered to the deep and still lake, filling the crater of an extinct volcano, and surrounded with forests ; on it there was a small canoe, and we admired the adjacent scenery, with its romantic peaks towering above us. The borders of the Grand Etang form a most interesting region, and above all fitted for a recluse. Here, in a delightful climate, he is lifted far above the cares and vanities of the world below—here the senses are continually regaled with beautiful flowers, delicious fruits, and noble views across the island, both to east and west ; and here the elevation of the spectator is so great, that the distant sea seems to mount high into the heavens, and contend with them for supremacy.

When surveying the deep valleys below where we stood, I could not help being overcome with painful feelings, for in these the peaceful Caribs of this lovely isle were cruelly pursued and massacred by the French, in 1650. There formerly stood their huts, which were burned to the ground, and their provisions rooted up by the merciless invaders of their territory; and on the sea-shore might be seen a precipice to which forty of the unoffending Indians ran to escape the sword, and “casting themselves headlong into the sea, they miserably perished.”

We left the Grand Etang reposing in its silent beauty, and rode down the mountain towards George Town—on the right were some mineral springs. We halted for a while at a coffee plantation, on a commanding site, belonging to an old French resident; and from the kindness and amiability of the proprietor, I soon forgot my recent reflections on the barbarity of his ancestors.

From the parterre before this charming dwelling, a beautiful map was spread out before us. A succession of hill and dale descended to the sea-shore; there were cultivated fields bright with the sugarcane; verdant slopes studded with orange trees, with fruit yellow and golden, like that of the Hesperides, whilst bananas, shaddocks, guava, and mangoe trees were equally abundant. White houses were to be seen here and there among the woodland scenery, and in the far distance were the sails of the coasting vessels.

Grapes and fruits of every kind are more abundant in this island than in any other of the Caribbees; indeed, it is a general remark, that in all the French, Spanish, and Dutch islands, fruits, vegetables, and other luxuries are more easily procurable than in those colonized by the English, the first step taken by foreign colonists being to make themselves as comfortable as circumstances may admit, thereby showing their good sense; while on the other hand, I have always been provoked when remarking that the English colonist, forgetting his old predilection for comfort at home, thinks only of returning with wealth to his native land. Surely there is some defect in the education of our countrymen, that so few learn to become citizens of the world, and so few seem pleased whilst sojourning abroad. Habitual cheerfulness is a duty we owe to our Maker, to our neighbour, and to ourselves; in almost all situations we have a cause for thankfulness, on all occasions we ought to study to render those around us happy.

In the word home are the wishes of the English colonists centred; towards home all their labours tend, and in eager anticipation of the period when they are to return there, they forget that years of discomfort must elapse ere they can realize their wishes. There are still a few French people at Grenada, but the mass of the population is English, although it was only in 1798 that Sir Ralph Abercromby conquered the island from the French.

A considerable change has taken place of late years in the style of West Indian society ; it is now more civilized, and approximates nearer to the manners of the European world, than it did in days of yore. Formerly, we learn (from the accounts of those who resided on these islands) that dissipation and intemperance prevailed to an excessive degree, morals were at a low ebb, polite conversation was comparatively unknown, indolence marked the manners of the women, sensuality and debauchery those of the men. The large glass, capable of containing four or five bottles of liquid, and filled with the beverage 'yclept sangaree, being a compound of Madeira, sugar, water, and spices, was invariably placed upon the table the first thing in the morning, and left during the day, so that a casual visiter might be able to partake of it.

In some houses, a similar bowl of punch would be seen, and many of the West Indians, considering sangaree not sufficiently strong, preferred strong potations, and drank sangororum, which is wine in its pure state, but highly spiced. After repeated draughts during the day of these insidious beverages, which would undoubtedly make a man rather *non compos*, the West Indian would sit down to an early dinner, during which, he perhaps might discuss two or three bottles of Madeira—then finish the evening with brandy and water and cigars. Day after day the same system would be followed, until at last the health became affected. The

constitution, debilitated by repeated indulgences, would be ill-calculated to resist the attacks of a tropical fever—the bacchanalian orgies of the debauchee would then terminate in the grave, and his name would be added to the list of the supposed victims of a baneful climate.

During the war, the flower of West Indian proprietors was to be found in England; the planters were all absentees from their estates, and were living in Europe up to the amount of their income. Their sons and daughters, educated according to the best principles, were equal in manners and acquirements to the first society, and instead of becoming brutal, overbearing, and ignorant, by a constant residence amongst their inferiors, they assumed the refined tone of high life, and only viewed their estates as the means of enabling them to live in England, without ever contemplating the probability of their being obliged to reside on them. When, however, their (too often) inconsiderate expenditure had drained their property to the utmost, and the value of West Indian produce became much diminished; when ashamed of retrenching their establishments in time, they heaped mortgage after mortgage upon the estates, in hopes of postponing the evil day, and at last, deprived of all other resources, were glad, to return to the West Indies, and perhaps act as agents for their creditors on estates only nominally their own,—the better classes in these islands, of course, benefited by the influx of men of polite and liberal

education ; and many of the old West Indian habits gave place to English manners and customs.

The sangaree, though not quite disregarded, is at least no longer the ornament of the sitting-room, which formerly, when adorned with half emptied glasses and bottles, and savouring of tobacco and spirits, must have been more like a pot-house than “ the bower of a faire ladye.” Female society (without which the world is a blank) again came into repute ; conversation, instead of being confined to the merits of an estate, or whether sugars were up or down, was extended to literature and the fine arts ; and a person who had learnt to dance, had now some chance of practising that accomplishment with some as pretty lady-like girls as he could expect to see at home.

I next rode through the town, up and down steep streets, and past stores replenished with showy wares ; everything, they say, is beautiful at Grenada, animate and inanimate objects, and I certainly remarked some most attractive creole women ; and both the white men and coloured females had an air of life and sprightliness about them here, which was quite delightful as contrasted with the listlessness and apathy of other inter-tropical places. But I exclaimed with Coleridge, “ Grenadians, where are your wives ?” for nowhere could I see a white female face.

I wended my way past Government-house, usually occupied by Sir James Campbell, then on a tour of

inspection through the islands, and up the winding ascent to Richmond heights, to pay my respects to Major Raper, commanding a wing of the 19th regiment; and with this very superior and intelligent officer, I walked about the extensive works, and enjoyed the prospect of the interior of the island, the bays and the town below. I remarked that the accommodations for the troops, though in an airy situation, were very confined; breathing-room and shelter from the rain are indispensable for the comfort of troops in garrison, and here they had neither. The barrack-rooms were small, and the roofs in a bad state. I then sat down and conversed with the Major on military matters.

Courteous reader, if you are a civilian, be pleased to pass on to the chapter after the next, as I mean to indulge my military mania by discoursing about the state of our troops between the tropics; details such as follow may be tedious to you, therefore enter not the barrack-room unless you feel interested in those whose only home it is.

As I viewed the West Indies as a traveller, and not as one who was obliged to "set up his staff" there, whether the climate agreed with him or not, my impressions were rather more favourable of that part of the world, than they perhaps would have been, if I had been stationed there for any length of time. The novelty of the scenes I witnessed, the beauty of the country, the hospitable manner in which I was entertained, and my remaining but

a short time at one spot, made me overlook many of the drawbacks attendant on a residence in the West Indies, “ where I had no continued city.”

As a military station, the West Indies for - a *lengthened period* is the worst that a young officer can possibly resort to; he has little to gain there in a professional point of view, and the chances are twenty to one that, secluded as he will most likely be from much general society, his habits may become dissipated and unprofitable to himself; but for *the short period* of service usually allotted to regiments in the West Indies, I see little cause of complaint. If officers would only try to make the most of their situation, they have abundant leisure for intellectual pursuits—excellent opportunities to perfect themselves in drawing or music, if they have a taste for these twin accomplishments; and now, by the institution of the United Service Museum, an occupation is furnished them on foreign stations, viz. an inducement to collect and preserve objects of natural history. Besides, in gardening, there will always be found much to please and interest the temporary exile from his father-land.

I have met with many military men who have passed the greater part of their lives in the West Indies, and are now so completely creolized, that I doubt much if they would wish to return home. Whereas the young men are of course all anxious to escape from their island prisons, as they term them, lest indolence and apathy should cast a spell

over them. In point of salubrity, as I said before, I do not think that the West Indies are by any means so bad as the East; for sometimes in the West a year elapses and not a single officer dies; whereas in the East, amongst an equal number of regiments, several in the same space of time would have fallen victims to the diseases of the climate. Be it remembered too, that the East India Company will not agree to relieve King's regiments until after the lengthened period of two-and-twenty years, whereas regiments in the West are relieved every five years.

But withal the East is a glorious land to serve in, a land of romance and adventure: "as children we delight in it as the scene of the Thousand and one Nights; ladies love it, as from it are derived gems and silks and Cashmere shawls; and soldiers, because there high reputations have been earned and may still be won." Well pleased am I that it fell to my lot to serve some years in Eastern climes; and many tales of war and pilgrimage has a sojourner there for any time to relate. The East is full of interest and excitement, wherever you move. What could be more delightful than this?—donning that noble head-dress, a Moslem turban, white robe, shawl, girdle, and loose trowsers; armed with sword and pistol, and with two trusty domestics, going forth as bent upon adventure as ever knight errant that set lance in rest; visiting caverned temples, and the splendid remains of by-gone ages; hunting deer with the cheeta, or

leopard, or lying in wait for the brindled tiger ; living entirely with the natives, conforming to their customs, studying their language, and gaining an insight into their remarkable characters and peculiarities. But I must not allow my pen to run wild in describing life in the East ; at present I have to speak of occidental climes—of a West Indian life. The most humorous illustration was given by a portly major, with whom the heat did not at all agree : during the day he would sit in a tub of cold water, and every now and then ejaculate, “ Damn Columbus—curse the fellow, why did he discover these rascally islands ! ”

CHAPTER XVI.

Discourse on Military Matters continued.—Advantages of Regimental Schools.—Libraries and Theatres.—Encouragement ought to be given to Games.—Soldiers ought to be fitted for Settlers. — Bathing indispensable between the Tropics.—Spare Tanks ought to be converted into Baths.—Unfortunate situation of soldiers' wives.—Repairs of barracks ought not to be delayed.—Improvements in barracks proposed.—Verandahs, shutters, and open blinds.—Danger of exposure to night air.—A light ought to burn in each barrack-room.—Campaigning in the East.—The Canteen.—Alterations proposed.—Military drunkenness might be got rid of.—Pernicious effects of New Rum.—New Rum increases the Pension List.—Malt liquor recommended.—Canteen Keepers.—Change of diet recommended.—Invalids sent home from Antilles only once a year.—Ridiculous clamour of pseudo-political economists.—Military Costume.—The Forage and Dress Caps.—Under Vests.—Officers and Men ought to be thoroughly drilled with the Reserve.—Uniform in the Colonies ought to be generally worn.—Strength of the French in the Antilles.—Conclusion.

IN those regiments where particular attention is paid to establish schools, and to provide books and periodical publications for the men, the greatest benefits have arisen ; with a further view of occupying the minds of the soldiers, and contributing to their amusement, regimental theatres should be encouraged. Major Raper “got up” a theatre both at Grenada and St. Vincent's, in which a party of the men performed twice a month, to the

no small entertainment of their comrades. It may probably excite a smile, and appear ridiculous for soldiers to assume the buskin; but among the various characters of a barrack-room a greater portion of natural talent is generally to be found than the public seem disposed to allow, and in many regiments there will be found a dozen performers, who would do credit to any country theatre at home.

To vary the amusements, and if possible to dissipate the gloom of a foreign station, which at best is only a temporary exile, every encouragement ought to be given during leisure hours to bowls, quoits, and other games requiring moderate exertion. In the East Indies we used to have a fives-court, but some commanding officers object to this, and both fives and rackets are considered too violent for the West Indies; they are so in the middle of the day, but not in the morning and evening. Cricket would be less violent, but there is seldom suitable ground within a reasonable distance. The sudden stoppage of perspiration is the principal thing to be guarded against, and officers know how difficult a thing it is to get a British soldier to change his apparel when heated; it therefore ought to be borne in mind, that all games requiring severe bodily exertion, between the tropics become objectionable; but let the men be continually exercised, let them be taught mechanical arts, to fit them for settling either in Canada or Australia when discharged, and above

all, let us spurn the idea that British soldiers ought to be mere machines.

What is much wanted in the smaller West India Islands, and which if acceded to would tend to promote both health and cleanliness, is a greater facility for the men to wash their persons. The distance of the hill forts from the sea, with the uncertainty of the weather and general bad state of the roads, seldom admit of bathing, and the daily allowance of fresh water being limited to two gallons each for all purposes, viz. cooking, drinking, washing of clothes and themselves, one can readily fancy how difficult it is for the poor fellows to preserve even the semblance of cleanliness. I may here remark, that to economise water when scarce, and at the same time to cleanse the skin most effectually, a small bag of coarse cloth to fit the hand may be used. A hair or cloth bag drawn on the hand like a glove, and dipped in water, is much superior to the sponge.

When we consider the heat of the barrack-room, and the many duties to which soldiers are subject, such as fatigue parties, exercise at drill, marching to and from the distant guards, &c. combined with their exposure to every change of weather, it is scarcely possible to entertain the notion that they are altogether cleanly; on the contrary, they must at all times be otherwise—a circumstance which cannot fail in some degree to affect their health. That however might easily be prevented, and at a very slight expense, for even in garrisons, where

scarcity of water may exist, the construction of a moderate-sized tank, or the "fixing up" of the spare metal ones now kept in store, would under a proper arrangement suffice. It would at the same time be requisite to have, contiguous to it, a small room capable of accommodating six or eight men, and provided with as many small tubs to enable them to wash their bodies.

By a suitable regulation in the hours of attendance, the same room would serve for the women and their children. At present these unfortunate creatures, when in barracks, labour under greater disadvantages than the men; the latter can adopt what is termed dry rubbing as an aid in cleaning their bodies, whereas the poor women cannot even do that if they have a regard to decency. The health of the women and children is an object of great importance, for whatever maladies arise among them generally spread through a corps.

Great delays frequently take place in the repairs of barrack-rooms in foreign stations; I am not at liberty to enter into the cause of this, but merely allude to it, and hope that ere long some new regulation may be issued on this important point. Men ought not to be exposed to sun or damp in their quarters, and where the materials are abundant, the remedy is easy, and ought to be speedily applied.

The construction of the barrack buildings varies in different stations. It may therefore be remarked

generally in what appears would prove beneficial to the troops. Whenever a barrack is without a verandah, especially on the windward aspect, it should have both jalousies (open blinds) and window shutters; the former alone being insufficient in stormy weather to prevent the rain from beating in and wetting the men's beds; while on the contrary, when the latter are used singly, although a protection from rain, they are in every slight shower obliged to be closed, when they exclude the air altogether. In blowing weather, when open, they also admit so strong a current of air, that the men are liable to catch cold, which is the primary cause of most of the maladies in the West Indies. By having both jalousies and shutters (even if not provided with a verandah), a barrack may be preserved dry under the heaviest rains; while in moderate weather the men can exclude the wet, and at the same time admit sufficient air for their general comfort. However, when the position of a barrack will allow of it, verandahs are doubtless the most desirable, as they exclude the overpowering heat of a tropical sun, and serve as places for the men to clean their appointments and take their meals in; they also prevent the accumulation of dust and dirt, which would otherwise unavoidably ensue, for when fifty or sixty men are obliged to clean their pouches and shoes, and to pipe-clay their belts, in the same room in which they constantly eat and sleep, cleanliness

is scarcely to be expected. In such a case, instead of breathing a pure and wholesome atmosphere, the men are inhaling dust and pipe-clay.

Many complaints originate in a sudden exposure of the men from a warm bed and an overheated barrack to the chillness of the night, when they move out on certain occasions, often without taking the trouble to put on their clothes. The ill effects which may thus arise might be prevented, by merely having a small and well ventilated room attached to each barrack.

It would be very desirable to have *one lamp* in each barrack throughout the night. By proper management, a very trivial extra quantity of oil would suffice, which with the cost of the lamp would be the only expense attending it ; at present, when the men move out in the dark, they are apt to come in contact with the iron bedstead, and are sometimes so much injured, as to be obliged to go into hospital, which by the aid of a light might be avoided ; they could also, in case of an alarm, dress and turn out in half the time they could do in the dark. It would, moreover, prevent the occurrence or even the suspicion of disorderly conduct of any kind ; and all danger from fire would be guarded against by having the lamps under lock and key.

In marching or campaigning in the East, each man was ordered to have a carpet to sleep on, and a quilt ; and each tent was provided with a tar-

Pauline to spread on the ground, and thus keep the men from the damp. Troops in garrison require no tarpauline, but nothing could be better adapted for the field.

Some objections may be stated to the present canteen system. As long as it is the only object and interest of a canteen contractor to encourage drinking, and increase the sale of his rum, so long will the daily temptation be held out to the soldier to get drunk. Non-commissioned officers may be stationed in the canteen to prevent inebriety, but the contractor and the soldier can easily evade their scrutiny.

If all the general canteens were to be abolished, and each regiment had its own canteen under proper control, and the non-commissioned officers who superintended the issue of liquor were to receive no profit on the quantity sold, but merely be exempt from certain duties, drunkenness would soon disappear, aided by that excellent regulation of last year, that a penny a day be given in lieu of an allowance of liquor as formerly.

Rum of the best quality might be procured by the Commissariat, and kept two or three years in store prior to its issue; this would ensure a wholesome spirit, and obviate the pernicious effects of new or adulterated rum. Few in this country know that new rum is a powerful nocturnal diuretic.

A man in the West Indies getting drunk with new rum, or "kill devil," is sure to experience a

singular effect from it ; whereas, getting intoxicated with any other spirit, is not attended with the disreputable consequence here alluded to.

No loss could fall on Government by the plan proposed. A price might be put upon the rum equal to the present receipts from the canteen contractor, together with a trifling sum to recompense the sergeant and corporal, and still the soldiers would gain the difference between those united sums and the profit now made by the contractor ; or, if thought proper, the present canteen price might be continued, which would not only serve to pay the non-commissioned officers, but cover all loss by wastage in store, and leave a considerable profit to Government besides.

The injurious effect of new rum on all constitutions has been too often verified to admit of a doubt ; and there is as little doubt, that there are at this moment many individuals, who, by a too free indulgence in its use, have become a burthen to the nation in the capacity of pensioners : men who would have been useful and efficient soldiers if perhaps a different canteen system had been in force.

Cheap as malt liquor is in England, it might be worth the attention of Government to provide a regular supply for the use of the troops ; such men as wished it might then be allowed a reasonable portion at their meals—a measure which would reduce the consumption of ardent spirits, be more conducive to health, and ultimately benefit

the public. A profit might be put upon the ale or beer, which (from the greater quantity likely to be consumed) would equal the present gain on rum. The Board of Ordnance might object to this arrangement, as the canteen profits would then be transferred from that department to the Commissariat; but as John Bull pays for all, one cannot see why the public money may not as well pass through one branch of the service as another, when an evident advantage would accrue.

From regiments the canteen returns might be paid weekly; the expense of advertisements, risk of loss by the failure of canteen contractors and their securities, and the correspondence which at times arises on the misconduct of canteen keepers, would all be avoided. The canteen keepers in some of the West Indian islands do not provide the troops with any description of provisions, and are not, in consequence, required to reside in garrison. The profits on the trifling consumption of bread, tea, &c. by a wing of a regiment, would probably not repay them for loss of time, so they merely attend the canteen when open for the sale of rum; but it is supposed to be a mutual advantage, for the soldiers are regularly supplied, and on as reasonable terms, by market people who attend at the barrack gates. Whenever a canteen keeper undertakes the provisions, and for that purpose resides with his family in garrison, it invariably leads to drunkenness; for under the pretence of purchasing tobacco or other trivial articles, the

men can at any hour procure rum without being detected.

With regard to the men's diet, it seems more a subject of consideration for medical than military men. I am however of opinion, that the soldiers would benefit by an increased allowance of fresh meat, in lieu of so much salt provisions, which corrupt their blood, and increase their thirst; at present they have the latter five days a week, and the ration is ill-proportioned; that of salt pork, for instance, not being enough, while the allowance of rice and peas is rather more than sufficient. The pork ration weighs only nine ounces and one-seventh, and when boiled scarcely exceeds four ounces and a half, which is rather a limited portion for a grenadier of six feet; still I am no advocate for strong animal food in any climate, much less in a hot one.

The troops in the West Indies labour under a serious inconvenience by invalids being sent home only *once a year*; many soldiers in consequence fall victims to the climate, whose lives might have been saved by a timely removal, and the trifling additional expense would be an infinitely less public loss than is at present incurred by the sacrifice of so many valuable lives. It would likewise greatly diminish the list of pensioners, as many men who are invalided at Chatham as unfit for further service, would, if sent home at an early stage of their complaints, recover at their respective depôts, and again become effective soldiers. Our service la-

bours under great inconvenience at present, from the outcry there is for retrenchment on the part of civilians, and mistaken economists; they display great ignorance of military matters, as is natural to be supposed, call aloud for a reduction of the army, and to substitute a militia for the regulars. How can reliefs be effected among so many colonies, unless with a considerable standing force? and what English militia would serve under the burning sun of Jamaica, or would relish looking over a rampart for ten years at Gibraltar?

The war department is most solicitous to promote the comfort and efficiency of the troops, but it is hampered by the pseudo political economists. Considerable attention ought always to be paid to military dress; though some old officers are indifferent to it, yet, really, the efficiency of a soldier depends much on his costume. I am the better enabled to suggest certain points to be attended to in military appointments, from having had the good fortune to have seen most standing armies.

I have always remarked that the forage-cap is ill-adapted for the tropics; it neither protects the eyes nor head from the effects of a scorching sun, and there can be little doubt that it tends to augment the number of ophthalmia cases, headaches, fever, &c. The crown between the tropics ought to have cotton two inches in thickness in it—a peak invariably; and two white duck covers ought to be furnished to each man. The officers' dress

caps are equally objectionable, from their extreme weight, and their exposing the back of the head. Some officers cannot wear them an hour without suffering for the remainder of the day. The only people who can benefit by them, are those who derive an exorbitant profit on their sale. One thing is evident, that the same dress will not answer for all climates, either for the military or civilians.

The use of elastic cotton, or flannel under-waist-coats, is a point which claims the serious attention of the medical officers. It would probably be better if the men wore none, than only to have two under-vests as at present—for if they get wet while one is “at wash,” they have then no means of change, and become more liable to take cold than those who never use them. They should either have three each, or none; and it is of course questionable, whether a soldier whose constitution obliges him to wear flannel can be considered efficient in the field, where it would be impracticable for him to convey the number requisite to insure a change.

There is another point which it may be, perhaps, as well to mention, and which would contribute greatly to the comfort, and in some instances to the health of the troops. I allude to the expediency of having both officers and men *thoroughly drilled* at home, instead of allowing either the one or the other to join the service companies before they have acquired a competent knowledge of their

duty. This particularly applies to field officers and captains, on whom the command of a regiment, wing, or other portion, is likely to devolve. Whenever a commanding officer is himself ignorant of the minutiae of drill, those under him are sure to be unnecessarily harassed for his instruction; and it is well known from experience, that when any extraordinary degree of drilling is in progress between the tropics, the hospitals fill in proportion. Such a circumstance, whenever it occurs, also leads to a relaxation rather than an improvement in the discipline of the corps, for the men being aware that the instructor is unable to discover their errors, soon acquire loose and slovenly habits under arms, and lose all confidence in him. In fact, long and useless parades, and unnecessary exposure of the men, either to sun or rain, or to drilling on wet grass, ought to be prevented.

If a corps be in a good state of discipline when it embarks for foreign service, and every individual who may subsequently have to join it be *first* made thoroughly acquainted with his duty, very little drilling would be required to maintain it in the highest order.

It is with reluctance I mention it, but a sense of duty compels me to observe, that in one or two of the West India islands, the officers were allowed to appear on all occasions, and in all situations off duty, in sailors jackets, round hats, &c.; and this at a time when a slave insurrection

was dreaded, and the commandant habitually sat in his room with a brace of pistols on the table.

The military force in the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe amounts to seven thousand men. In all the British West India islands, in British Guiana, and Honduras, there are only eight thousand five hundred. Now, the French force is so disproportionate to ours, that, in the event of a sudden war, unless our fortresses were in good state for defence, our small garrisons would be overpowered in succession if the French were to act *en masse* against them; let us not then hear any more nonsense talked about our large and useless force in the West. We have laboured to show that these colonies are very valuable, they therefore ought to be defended against foreign foes and negro insurrection; every military man knows and feels to his cost, that for such a mighty colonial empire as that of Great Britain, our army is much too small, and having our country's glory and honour at heart, we only trust and pray that it may not be further reduced.

To civilians unacquainted with colonial service, and the many local inconveniences under which the troops labour, the foregoing remarks may appear trivial and undeserving of notice; but military men who have had an opportunity of personally observing the life of a soldier between the tropics, will perhaps be impressed with very different feelings. I confess I have written very unreservedly, and perhaps injudiciously, consider-

ing my rank and standing in the service to which I have devoted myself; and perhaps I may be accused of vanity or presumption. I do not intend either, and shall only add, that if from any of the observations which I have just made on military matters the comfort of the British soldier be increased, it will afford me much and lasting gratification.

CHAPTER XVII.

Leave Grenada.—Sail past the Grenadines.—Evening at Sea.—St. Vincent's.—Fort Charlotte.—Kingstown.—Visit the Citadel.—The Governor.—Botanical Garden.—Marooning parties.—Dangers attending them.—The Souffriere Mountain.—The eruption of 1812.—Earthquakes and showers of ashes.—Bursting of the lava.—Manner of visiting the Souffriere.—Canoes.—A Tarpeian Rock.—The charming Valley of Bucament.—The Wallibon River.—The road up the Mountain.—Scene of desolation.—The great Crater.—The Lake.—Thermometrical Observations.—Distant view of the Charib country.—The Charib war.—King Daniel.—The New Crater.—The perilous Descent to the Lake.—Sensations in the water.—Ascent.—Gusts of Wind.—Meteorology.

ON a squally night I embarked in a mail schooner, commanded by Captain Moffat, R.N., and after tripping our anchor, and sheeting home our top-sails, we stood away to the north-west; all next day we had baffling winds, but had an opportunity of seeing the Grenadines extending between Grenada and St. Vincent's. These small islands produce sugar and cotton; and the slaves rapidly increase upon them, for, as they consist commonly of only one estate each, the negroes have not a plurality of wives, as on other islands where concubinage is so prevalent.

We saw St. Vincent's towering in the distance as the sun set in majesty, and then the stars came out.





clear and sparkling in the azure sky. Few quiet pleasures can be compared to that of reclining on the deck of a vessel, and contemplating the glorious constellations flashing in glory in the heavens, and the gently heaving sea under the influence of a balmy breeze, between the tropics; one is soothed and refreshed by the scene and the temperature, and it is impossible to go below and repose in the dark cabin. If the dews are not heavy, and the vessel is at some distance from shore, one may sleep on deck with perfect impunity; many hundred delicious dreams I have had on a hen-coop, disturbed only occasionally by a few rain drops on the face, and the rushing of many feet to take in sail, preparatory to the coming squall.

“ She bends before its force,
And dips her lee-side low beneath the waves;
Straight o’er the sea she flies, as when a hawk
Darts on a dove, and with a motionless wing
Cuts the light yielding air.”

Next day we stood towards St. Vincent’s, and saw the great Souffriere, or volcano, casting its shadow over the waves on the north-west of the island; we tacked to and from the shore, and had splendid views of the island scenery. If Grenada is lovely, St. Vincent’s is sublime in its character; the hills of the former are rounded in their outline, while those of the latter are sharp and abrupt, and deep valleys are bounded by steep precipices.

We passed under the guns of Fort Charlotte, on a lofty hill, with a conspicuous drawbridge across

a ravine; here a major had lately been shot by one of his men as he was returning from a party. Then opened the town of Kingstown, built round a wide bay, with country-houses rising behind the streets, among which was the house of the Governor, in a garden; but the most conspicuous object was a church, with a taper spire; in the back ground was a chain of lofty mountains.

We came to an anchor, and ran our boat on shore on a pier-less and wharf-less beach, and were obliged to watch the receding waves to land dry. I took up my residence with Mr. Le Gall, in a cool and pleasant house, washed by the Atlantic.

Mounting a horse, I rode through the town, and passed a market filled with negroes in holiday clothes, trafficking and chattering at a great rate, and then passed up a very steep road to Fort Charlotte; here was stationed a wing of the 19th, under Colonel Hardy. So precipitous is the hill on which this handsome fort is built, that in looking from the mess-room windows, the sea is seen perpendicularly below, with the island of Becquia and the Grenadines in the distance, and Old Woman's Point forming the opposite horn of the Bay of Kingstown.

I inspected a valuable collection of island shells and a handsome library, the property of Major Dickson, of the Royal Engineers, and then descended the hill, and rode up a valley towards the Governor's residence; on the left, in a confined situation, where no fresh breeze could blow, were

the remains of the old French stone barracks, where many victims had succumbed to the climate.

We found ourselves in the botanic garden, a most interesting spot, but sadly neglected since the death of Mr. Anderson, who formed it; still, though choked with rank weeds, I remarked many rare plants, and fruits, and flowers, in wild luxuriance. We dismounted at a long single-storied cottage, and paid our devoirs to Sir George Hill. Though an elderly gentleman, he has had no cause to complain of the climate of St. Vincent's; yet his Excellency seemed puzzled to account for my visiting the Antilles voluntarily, and risking my health. I explained that since I lived strictly by rule, I considered myself free to roam wheresoever I listed. After receiving an invitation to spend a day with Sir George, I took leave. My stay in St. Vincent's was short, which I much regret, for I consider it the most interesting island I have ever seen; in point of scenery, its character is awfully sublime, and well calculated to withdraw the mind from trifling sublunary pursuits to the contemplation of the founder of the everlasting hills.

No island affords such excellent opportunities for marooning parties, or pleasure excursions, as St. Vincent's. The officers stationed here, if they please, may be engaged in one of these every week during the favourable season, for the planters and merchants delight in pic-nics, and they have always been patronized both by Governors Hill and Brisbane. True, they are rather dangerous for those

who have left a dulcinea in England, or wish to preserve a whole heart ; for enjoying a pleasant repast in a tent pitched in a rural spot beneath lofty trees, lively conversation without formality, sparkling wine and sparkling eyes, an evening's ramble by the flowery bank of a clear and murmuring stream, with a fair and light-hearted creole under one's arm ; now admiring the distant mountains, or the wide expanse of the Atlantic, and then reciprocating glances of satisfaction at the scene, and pleased with one another ; he must be cold indeed, or extremely philosophical, who can long resist such seductions. As Enat Oolla has it, " the heart becomes entangled in the snare of her dark tresses, and the bird of the soul becomes a captive in the net of her glossy ringlets."

Conspicuous among the majestic mountains of St. Vincent's, is the Souffriere, occupying the north-west point of the island. This celebrated volcano is the grandest scene in the West Indies. The lofty summit is only to be seen at intervals between the rolling clouds, and the sides are furrowed with streams of lava.

Before the last eruption in 1812, the great crater, five hundred feet in depth, and three miles in circumference, contained within it a conical hill, streaked beautifully with sulphur, like a tulip, and covered with shrubs and flowers, amongst which rare birds " warbled their wood-notes wild."

On the 27th of April 1812, after many violent convulsive throes, columns of smoke ascended from

the mountain ; these were followed by showers of light pebbles and dust, which covered the vegetation on the hills and valleys around. On the 30th, earthquakes shook the solid earth ; smoke and showers of ashes were thrown up rapidly and portentously from the mountain, indicating some direful event ; and all the whites, Charibs, and negroes fled from the vicinity of the mountain.

After a great roaring and agitation in the Souffriere, the hot lava boiled up to the mouth of the crater, overflowed, and ran down the sides of the mountain, destroyed the vegetation, and covered the surrounding country with streams of melted rocks : all this while the earth heaved in agony, the thunder pealed about the dread summit of the Souffriere, and forked lightning flashed round its burning sides. It was a dreadful night !

The showers of stones, sand, and ashes, fell over the whole island, and were even carried to some of the neighbouring colonies. After a week's agitation the mountain became still ; then nought was heard “ but the murmur of the torrent from afar ; the roaring waves which climbed the distant rocks ; the flies of evening on their feeble wings, and the hum of their course on the field.”

In order to visit the Souffriere, let the traveller embark at Kingston in a canoe, manned by half a dozen stout negroes. The island canoes are hollowed out of cedar trees, raised on the sides with planking, and may be pulled at the rate of seven or eight miles an hour. The proprietors on the

coast allow their negroes to go to market in these canoes, and they sometimes come a distance of thirty miles.

In pulling round to the north-west, a high perpendicular rock, washed by the sea, is pointed out, from whence the Charibs are said to have hurled their criminals, as the Romans did theirs from the Tarpeian. Whilst passing close under this precipitous cliff, it is difficult to repress a shudder, on imagining to oneself the number of victims whose frantic shrieks have rent the air when dashed from the dizzy height into the gulf below. During the war, cannon were hauled up at this place from vessels which could come alongside; and a fort is seen on another commanding eminence.

Though the coast is very bold, yet on every practicable spot are seen plantations of canes, and one or two villages; but of all the valleys I ever saw, I think that of Buccament bears away the palm, and might dispute it with the happy and secluded vale of Rasselas. In one respect, it is far superior to the retreat of the Prince of Abyssinia; it is open to the sea, overhanging mountains formed the sides, from which rivulets descended, watering the vegetation. "The banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every plant shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground." Precipices of bare rock alternated with the verdure, and down the vale ran a clear and rapid river, abounding in mullet. The valley is five miles long, shut in with a mountain at the up-

per end; and is a mile in width, where the river pours into the Atlantic. Altogether, "it forms a most luxuriant picture of cultivation, contrasted with romantic views, and is wholly secluded from the world." On viewing this enchanting scene from the sea, these lines were recalled to memory, and I participated in the feeling which suggested them.

"Let me, where yon tall cliffs are rudely piled,
Where towers the palm amidst the mountain trees,
Where pendent from the steep, with graces wild,
The blue liania floats upon the breeze,
Still haunt those bold recesses, Nature's child,
Where thy majestic charms my spirit seize."

Cumberland Bay is next passed, wooded to the water's edge, and here, landing at Richmond estate, on the Wallibon river, the manager's house is reached, looking down from an eminence on another charming valley.

At the mouth of the Wallibon river, from whence the sketch of the Souffriere, six miles distant, was made by my friend Mr. George Parker, there is a broad expanse covered with black sand and ashes. The river was larger before the eruption, but now varies in size according to the heaviness of the rains. This desolate waste was once a green sward, with the proprietor's house in the centre of it, immediately behind which were the buildings; of these there remains only the side of the boiling house. The desolation was caused some time after the eruption, by the bursting of the river, carrying along with it immense quantities

of sand and ashes with which it was dammed up. On the left of the picture is a bay, and the perpendicular cliffs are composed apparently of black ashes, which are washed away when the sea is raised by storms.

Leaving the manager's house, the road to the Souffriere passes through cane fields, and a thicket of long grass and ferns which reach over a horse's back ; the path then can hardly be seen, and seems to be on a narrow ridge, on each side of which is a precipice, that to the west being the most terrific. The danger here is considerable from the difficulty of keeping the path ; the shrubs are so thick, the ferns so tough, that they can hardly be broken through, and the grass is sharp and cutting ; the ascent is gradual. Six large trees, half way to the volcano, afford a shade under which to refresh, and to admire the graceful forms of the tree ferns scattered here and there.

For some distance beyond the resting-place the path continues intricate as before, and then the crater ridge is reached. This is more thinly sprinkled with trees ; till, towards the summit, it is quite bare, and furrowed with the traces of the mountain torrents and of lava, whilst sand and ashes are under-foot. To the south is a mountain, which seems to overhang the traveller ; it is richly covered to the top with tufted foliage, which forms a contrast to the scene on the north ; there desolation seems to have marked it as its own ; the destructive agency of fire has annihilated the vegetation and

left nothing but a bare, barren, and blackened mass of rocks. Here might the naturalist pitch his tent and watch the vegetation improving as we descend the mountain, lichens, mosses, grasses, shrubs, and trees.

There is a convenient nook for leaving the horses, and then, on walking forwards twenty yards probably, a mighty cloud of vapour will be seen; it fills the crater to the brim, gradually clears off, and the whole majesty of the scene is unfolded. Instinctively the gazer recoils from the abyss beneath his feet, and his senses are wrapt in amazement, for he sees before him one of the most awful scenes in nature; the sides of the mighty goblet with a lake at the bottom, are themselves mountains—here descending in a perpendicular wall to the water, and there inclining at an angle of 45° : distinctly marked on the sides of the cauldron is the height of the water of the lake at different times, the variation of which takes place doubtless from rain and evaporation.

According to my very intelligent informant, Mr. John Tinney, of Liverpool, the eastern lip of the crater is three thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea, and there also the depth from the lip to the surface of the lake in the crater is five hundred feet, the circumference of the cauldron at the top is about three miles: a cold mist commonly rests on the surface of the green, slimy, and unfathomable water at the bottom; and so hor-

rible is the scene, that one almost expects to see the fiend rise "on ebon wing" from the surface of the dreary lake.

In a country where the mean fall of rain exceeds one hundred inches, a funnel one mile in diameter must collect a great quantity of water; and, owing to the dense fogs and the lower temperature at the summit of the Souffriere, the evaporation is much less than in the plain, while the fall of rain is greater.

The three peaks to the north of the crater are all of the same height nearly, that is, four thousand feet above the sea. On one of these Mr. Charles Parker, of Liverpool, a gentleman of considerable scientific acquirements, observed the thermometer at forty-five minutes past two, P. M. on the 31st of July 1824, when clear, to stand at 69° ; and when hazy, at 70° ; whilst about noon, in the plain, it indicated 82° of heat.

From the Souffriere, when the day is clear, an extensive view may be had of that wild region, the Charib country, now occupied by a mere handful of red Indians; formerly, there were black as well as red Charibs in St. Vincent's, the former supposed to be sprung from the survivors of a wrecked slave-ship. In 1794 the black Charibs revolted against the authority of the English, and with the assistance of the French, maintained for two years a desperate struggle with our troops, (among other regiments engaged, was the 42nd) till that doughty knight, Sir Ralph Abercromby,

finally subdued them—they were then removed to Rattan Island. A sketch of the war is to be met with in the pleasant work of Mr. F. W. N. Bailey, entitled “Four Years in the West Indies.”

The red Charibs who now remain in St. Vincent's, are in number one thousand, including both sexes; they are an idle and luxurious race, live in comfortable huts, cultivate their provision-grounds, and barter fish and curious baskets for rum. Some time ago they had a king, or chief, called Daniel, a venerable patriarch, who had a harem of five wives; he was short and thin, with an olive complexion, prominent nose, straight hair, and wild fiery eyes—perhaps his majesty is still alive.

In walking along the brink of the crater it is necessary to clamber over ridges covered with slippery moss, on a loose soil, without a shrub to hold by, and a false step will send the adventurer rolling down into the Souffriere. After a mile and a half (or half way round) is accomplished, the new crater is seen; it lies to the south-east of the other, and if the mist is thick and a breeze blowing, as is often the case, it is necessary to crawl forwards on hands and knees, otherwise it is impossible to avoid a fatal accident whilst looking into the lesser crater.

The two craters are separated only by a narrow ridge, or saddle, which, though apparently impassable, a sailor once succeeded in crossing. The new crater is more of an abyss than its neighbour, its sides are more rugged and frightful, but it is

much smaller at bottom, where is a mass of black ashes and sand, and a little water of a red clayey hue ; sometimes it is quite dry. When the force of the last eruption was beginning to subside, these ashes must have fallen back into the crater again. It was not known till some time after that a new crater had been formed. The earthquakes are supposed to have ceased on its formation, by the free vent which was then given to the fused matter in the bowels of the earth.

It is possible, but it is a perilous enterprise, to descend to the surface of the lake in the great crater. It is necessary to slip down rocks and gulleys, having only small projecting stones, roots of grass, and shrubs to hold by and to stand upon. A few small plants are beginning to make their appearance, but what are they to the rich scene which was presented in the time of the historian of the West Indies, Edwards, when also the sweet notes of a bird were heard, now no longer known ?

The rapid descent occupies about twenty minutes, and then there is a small promontory which juts out a few yards into the water. Here two friends stripped, and determined to bathe in the appalling lake, with its slimy water of unfathomable depth ; they plunged into the abyss, but nothing could equal the sensations which overwhelmed them on finding themselves in the water, and on looking up and around them ; the green and brackish water chilled their bones, and a feel-

ing of horror came over them, when they considered they were in a vast and deep cauldron enclosed with black and steep rocks, and over head the sky. It seemed as if they were about to be swallowed up, and they were not long in regaining the land; their ascent was difficult and slow, and often they thought of giving up the attempt through fatigue. Diverging from the proper path, which increased the danger, and turning to the right, they were stopped by a gulley; then to the left they clambered over ridges of sand, and along shelving rocks; but at last reached the top in safety, having performed a feat which none ever before attempted.

It is curious to observe a gust of wind whirling down into the crater; it is observed by the mist descending upon the water, which is twisted and tossed up into the air to some height.

At Langley Park, eight hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea, and below the Souffriere there fell, in 1822, 120.14 inches of rain.

There were dry days	-	-	-	104
Wet do.	-	-	-	261
				<hr/> 365 <hr/>
Floods	-	-	-	40
Thunder showers	-	-	-	60
				<hr/> 100 <hr/>

This, then, is a sketch of one of the most interesting mountains in the world ; at present it shows no symptoms of again vomiting forth its destructive lava, but the day may not be far distant when it will again send out its waving and admonitory pyramids of smoke, and be shaken with earthquakes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Sail in His Majesty's brig Reindeer for Jamaica.—Our Passengers.—High Dignitaries lightly spoken of.—Resuscitation of a Flying-fish.—A gallant Breeze.—St. Domingo.—The Blue Mountains of Jamaica.—Anchor off Port Royal.—The great Earthquake.—A Musquito Fleet.—Pleasure of Canoe-sailing.—The streets of Kingston.—The Commander of the Forces.—Jeremiads.—An Anti-slavery Newspaper.—Incendiaries.—Small-pox.—British and American merchantmen compared.—Bribery of Custom-house Officers.—British men-of-war in the Antilles.—An accommodating Storekeeper.—The Barracks at Up Park Camp.—A Military Funeral.—Effects on the Living.—The seasoning fever.—The Yellow Fever not a contagious Disease.—Dr. Pinckard.—The Yaws and Cra-cra.—Draining of Swamps neglected.—Treatment of Yellow Fever.—Public Buildings in Kingston.—Markets and Hospitals.—The Native School.—Thoughts on Education.—Excursion to the Mountains.—The great Lagoon.—A Coffee Estate.—The Battle of the Bats.—View from the Mountains of Liguanea.—Spanish Town.—Lord Belmore.—An Antiquary put to flight.—The order of Travellers.

ONE afternoon, when I was hesitating whether to go or stay some days longer in St. Vincent's, with which I was quite fascinated, His Majesty's packet brig Reindeer appeared round Old Woman's Point, stood across the bay, backed her fore-top sail, and sent a boat on shore with the mails. She was proceeding direct to Jamaica; such an opportunity was not to be lost, so I took a passage in her, shipped

myself and baggage at half an hour's notice, and we stood away into the Caribbean Sea.

Lieutenant Dickens, R.N. our commander, was a smart officer and a perfect gentleman, so we had a pleasant time of it. Other passengers we had—two ladies and two gentlemen; one of these last was a youngster who had just been “cut adrift from his mother's apron-string.” Many were the tricks played upon him. In crossing the Tropic the sailors proceeded to duck the greenhorns; our youth barricaded himself in his cabin, and swore he would complain to the Admiralty if they attempted to ill-use him. “Complain to the Admiralty!” said a great hairy fellow of a boatswain's mate; “by George! we would souse the Lords o' the Admiralty themselves, if they were here, in a couple of shakes — I'm d—d if we wouldn't.” A flying-fish came in at a port one morning, and young master greedily caught up the curiosity and put it in his basin, thinking to bring it alive again; a mischievous dog watched when he went on deck, and laid it on his bed: he turned in to take his afternoon's siesta, and on getting up he made a great outcry on finding the fish smashed under him; but he was pacified and consoled when told that his experiment had succeeded, the fish had come to life and had flown out of the basin into his bed!

Our packet had the usual defects of the old tengun brigs; very crank, no breadth of beam, low between decks, and small hot berths; but as we

had eight and nine-knot breezes, clear skies, and a lively sea sparkling in the sun or moon beams, we bowled along gaily, with light hearts and elastic spirits. The usual temperature of the air was eighty-three, and that of the sea eighty-two in the month of July.

After a week's run we sighted afar off the dim outline of part of St. Domingo, and then the lofty mountains near Point Morant, the eastern cape of Jamaica. It was a magnificent scene, this part of the island; the Blue Mountains, eight thousand feet high, towered above a stratum of clouds, and the rugged hills below them were furrowed by ravines; we could see no level land, but the steep cliffs descended abruptly into the sea, on which were one or two small coasting-vessels. As we approached nearer, we observed that the hills were not altogether barren, black forests were upon their sides, and patches of bright emerald green, and white houses, were seen as we ran along the south coast towards Port Royal.

From Fort Nugent, conspicuous under a steep hill, to Port Royal, there is a narrow spit of land, called the Palisades, composed of sand overgrown with mangroves, studded with grave-stones, and having a conspicuous pirate's gallows upon it. Behind this is the harbour of the capital; and Kingston itself was seen on an extended plain, and, somewhat after the manner of Port of Spain, was encircled with mountains. We stood close in shore, and saw coral banks quite close to us, over which

an angry current swept ; we rounded to under the guns at Fort Point, almost touching them with our lower studding-sail boom ; our canvass was quickly taken in, and we dropped anchor among a squadron of men-of-war. Among other vessels was the *Champion*, eighteen, in which I had returned from Burma five years before.

The present town of Port Royal, opposite to which we lay, is now reduced to three or four streets and a few lanes ; at times there is considerable bustle here, for it contains the navy-yard for heaving down and refitting men-of-war, also barracks and an hospital. Old Port Royal, which rose by piracy and the slave-trade to be one of the wealthiest cities in the New World, was built on a sandy stratum which rested on a rock ; a dreadful earthquake shook it with its inhabitants into the sea, and our anchor lay among the ruins, which may be seen under the wave in a clear day.

“ The earth below

Gushed out in fire, and from the brazen sky,
And from the boiling seas such wrath did flow,
As saw not Shinar's plain or Babel's overthrow.”

We had hardly come to an anchor when we saw a musquito fleet of wherries and schooner-rigged canoes bearing down upon us from Kingston, distant seven miles ; the negro crews boarded us, and then came the “ tug of war ” as to who should have the honour and profit of conveying us to the capital. I placed my baggage in a canoe, and stood away up the harbour ; but I believe there

was more danger in this short run than on several voyages across the Atlantic. The canoe carried a heavy press of sail, the sea washed into us—the sea-breeze was very strong—the crew belayed the sheet, negro fashion, and the gaf top-sail fins of blue sharks might be seen cutting the wave near us; the hands sat on the weather-gunwale, and after several heavy lurches we “brought up” at a wooden wharf in Kingston.

In walking through the long, straight, dusty, and hot streets of Lower Kingston, I remarked that the houses were two-storied, with verandahs “aloft and alow,” and numerous stores, on the doors of which was written in chalk, “Oats on sale, herrings, &c.” to show that fresh supplies had just arrived. A crowd of negro boys ran past, dragging along by a string, with great shouting and cruelty, an unfortunate guana; it turned and gaped at them like a young crocodile, when the cowards took to their heels. I took shelter from the heat (90°) and stifling dust in the comfortable lodgings of Madam Sabut, who had two buxom and lively daughters.

I donned my uniform, and waited on Sir Wilmoughby Cotton, the Commander of the Forces. The General’s house (as well as many others in the upper part of the city) was spacious and well aired, the rooms were large and lofty, in the Madras style, and there were pleasant gardens outside. An old friend, Captain Finnucane, Assistant-Military-Secretary, started back when he saw me, as if I had been an apparition; and I need not say that

I was most hospitably entertained by the General, who for years had moved in the gay circle at Carlton Palace.

In wandering among the West Indian islands last summer, it was truly painful and distressing to hear the desponding tones of the planters and merchants. I deeply sympathised with them, for they did not complain without very good reason; still I felt my own spirits sink with being continually in the house of lamentation, and hearing constantly jeremiads. Thus I went into a store in Kingston, belonging to one of the most respectable merchants of the place; he said, "We were lately in a thriving way, but the crisis which we long dreaded is now come. I would willingly stay here, but incendiaries set the town on fire every week—they can't be detected; and then again the saints at home have established the Watchman Anti-Slavery newspaper; it has not fifty subscribers in the colony, and to conduct and publish such a paper requires £2000 per annum, so that it must be supported by our *kind friends* at home who seek our ruin: now if we merchants, who mainly support the planters, leave the colony for the United States, the planters' state will be bad indeed."

I afterwards saw the Mayor, and he said he had just offered £1000 currency and freedom to any slave who would inform against the incendiaries, who daily became more daring. Small-pox, too, afflicted this unfortunate city and its suburbs; one thousand had perished in the last six weeks: I saw many funerals.

I strolled down to Kingston harbour, and was pleased to see the crowd of shipping, that, notwithstanding the bad times, still lay off the town. Since the opening of the trade between the British West India Islands and the United States, this year (1831), I confess that I have experienced a painful sense of humiliation in witnessing in the West India ports the inferiority of the British merchant-vessels to those of the United States: the former, from a certain regulation of the custom-house, have no breadth of beam, their masts or yards are neither taunt nor square, they are abominably wall-sided, consequently are very crank, and unable to carry a press of sail, except in the most moderate weather. The American merchantmen, on the other hand, have all the qualities of a smart vessel, which the British want: true, they may not stow so much cargo in their holds, but they do not find it necessary to do so. Would it cause a great loss of revenue to alter the above regulation for admeasurement of British vessels? If our present system is persevered in, the Americans, by quick runs between port and port, will assuredly forestall us, and will continually go on injuring our trade, introducing their own manufactures, and underselling us everywhere.

Another point connected with the Customs may be here noticed. It is impossible to bribe American custom-house officers, because they receive three dollars a day, whether employed or not on board a vessel; at our ports, the custom-house

officers receive only 2*s.* 6*d.* when on board a vessel. In the West Indies they are also very inadequately paid, and when they make a seizure are not remunerated as they ought to be, and are often put to law expenses for their trouble. I need not state the consequences of all this. I was witness to an extensive smuggling transaction in the West Indies (not in Jamaica), where in open day a large quantity of French wines and liquors was landed at no great distance from the custom-house wharf with perfect impunity.

I never contemplate a British man-of-war without “feeling an increased warmth circulating through my veins — the conscious pride of a Briton that, of all seamen in the world, those of Old England are pre-eminent;” and yet, though I remarked on board our men-of-war in the West, that the men were very efficient, smart in their dress, and in a high state of discipline, and also that the condition of the rigging and decks was very creditable to all hands, I was mortified when I noticed the manner in which the midshipmen were allowed to land with the “liberty men.” What must people have thought when they saw officers of ships-of-war out at elbows, in green coats, and hats with part of a brim? There is much need of reform here.

At Port Royal there was no society for the naval officers; the store and billiard-table of a Frenchman, Johnny Feron by name, was the chief rendezvous. In the climate of the West Indies, some cannot get through the day without sipping a

little brandy and water ; so, after Johnny's visitors had been served, he would call out to his negro boy, " Who call for grog, Tam ?" " Don't know name, massa, little tall gentleman, tink,"—" Well, put it down to all to prevent mistakes." Johnny was indifferent about marrying his three daughters to any decent man, but had no objection to dispose of them for a lieutenant's quarterly bill, or £27 ; he was a wonderfully accommodating character, and made " no mistakes."

I visited, with Colonel Macleod, Assistant-Adjutant-General, Fort Nugent and Rock Fort, defending the pass to the east of the capital ; and then drove to the handsome and commodious barracks at Up Park Camp. They are seated on a sloping plain at some distance from town, and present a fine range of buildings for the men, with comfortable quarters for the officers in front ; behind them, at some distance, are the noble mountain ranges, ridge above ridge, rising into the clouds ; on the grassy plain there was scattered wood, and in the centre in front of the barracks there was a solitary silk-cotton-tree, of venerable age, and paved round, on which the band play in the evening in fine weather. The Colonel pointed out a clear stream which ran past the barracks, and which filled one of the largest and best swimming-baths I ever saw, judiciously planned and perfected by Sir John Keane ; seeing all this, and the open airy situation of the barracks, I said, " Surely there can be no disease here ?" when the wailing notes of

the Dead March in Saul, and the heavy tread of soldiers with muskets reversed, accompanying an Assistant Surgeon of the 33rd regiment to the tomb, after a fatal attack of yellow fever, soon convinced me of the contrary. At the foot of the mountains in rear of the barracks, there are some pestilential swamps, which ought to be surveyed, and drained without delay.

A military funeral at all times, with "its slow music and solemn parade," is an awfully impressive scene:—in this instance it was doubly so, for the victim of the relentless destroyer had braved, for several years, the climate of Sierra Leone and Cape Coast, and, thinking himself perfectly safe in Jamaica, had imprudently exposed himself in the discharge of his duties, and died after a residence of only six weeks in the colony.

In hot climates, where the body is more predisposed to disease than in temperate climes, on witnessing the warlike honours paid to a deceased comrade, and hearing the "thrice-volleyed farewell," gloomy apprehensions, often attended with fatal consequences, are apt to occupy the minds of the beholder. As the poor doctor's mortal remains were carried past the guard, I observed the men turn out, and gaze on the heart-moving procession with looks of despondency:—"And what," thought I, "must be the feelings of the sick in hospital, on hearing the muffled drums and the muskets at the grave, when those in health are so affected by the ceremonial?" Soldiers ought not to be deprived

of the usual honourable obsequies of their calling ; but between the Tropics let the procession be conducted in a different manner, and move by a retired road to the final resting-place.

Most Europeans who visit the West Indies have an attack of seasoning fever, and it depends on their constitution and previous habits whether the attack is a severe one or not. This fever is the usual bilious one of Tropical climates, and is either intermittent, remittent, or continued—the latter is the true yellow fever. It may be taken as a general rule, that since nature has fitted man for living in all climates, it depends generally on a person's own precautions whether he escapes disease or not. In some situations, all precautions are unavailing—with our greatest care we are attacked by severe malady ; but, in general, the source of our health and happiness is at our own command.

Creoles and negroes are subject to intermittent fever ; Europeans, who have resided some time in the West Indies, are commonly attacked with fever in the remittent form ; whilst the healthiest and the strongest of the new comers are subject to the continued or yellow fever. Of late years, however, yellow fever in its most malignant form has not been prevalent in the British West India Islands.

To prove that the yellow fever is not a contagious disease, creolised or acclimated inhabitants of the Antilles are very seldom attacked by it. Though strangers are liable to be seized by the endemic, yet, whether the yellow fever be contagious or not,

it is decidedly imprudent to approach a patient too nearly, whilst labouring under it; and from some experience of the cholera in India, and the plague in Turkey, I may say the same of these insatiate devourers.

Dr. Pinckard, in his excellent notes on the West Indies, remarks, that it is not a law of contagion to make its attack upon the most robust and vigorous people; more commonly it assails those of tender fibre as,—for example, were any given number of strong, healthy men, and the same number of children, to be exposed at the same time to the influence of the contagion of small-pox, measles, or scarlatina, common observation informs us that the children would be found to be most susceptible of the impression, and attacked in the greatest number. But the very reverse of this would be the case, were they to be exposed in a similar manner to the cause producing the yellow fever—the men would be found to be the most susceptible, and a greater proportion of them would fall victims to the disease.

There is no doubt of the yaws and cra-cra (glandular and cutaneous diseases) being contagious disorders; but these are principally confined to the negroes, and arise from impure living.

The season in which yellow fever is most prevalent is at the decline of the wet season of the year. Whilst there is constant rain, or constant sunshine, there is little of this disease. Newly-cleared land, damp situations, and particularly salt marshes, or the mouths of rivers, generate yellow fever,—mias-

ma, or an unwholesome exhalation from decayed vegetable substances, causing it to attack individuals whose fibres are not sufficiently relaxed for a hot climate.

I had occasion to remark before, that it is lamentable to see how careless Europeans are in the West Indies of the soil near their towns. For the convenience of commerce, a town will be built near a deadly swamp; and if any one thinks it worth while to drain the marsh, and convert it into sugar-fields, the town will be healthy; if not, fevers are continually prevalent. The mad pursuit of wealth renders health quite a secondary consideration among nations calling themselves civilized.

The yellow fever is always attended with a derangement of the biliary system, and, consequently, the liver is affected. Bilious vomiting is a usual symptom, (hence the Spanish name of the disease “*el vomito negro*,”) then yellowness of the skin and eyes in the last stage.

Formerly the yellow fever was treated in the same way as the remittent, by the copious use of bark; but this has been found to be quite fallacious. Mercury, blood-letting, and the bath, are very efficacious in the early stages; and I heard of a Spanish doctor who was very successful in his treatment of the disease by administering a preparation from the juice of pine-apples.

Many of the fevers of the Antilles have a peculiar tendency to affect the brain, and the patients, though otherwise quite sensible, meditate self-

destruction. Several instances have thus occurred in which they succeeded in their fatal purpose.

“ No holy man, with pious care,
O'er their poor relics breathed a prayer ;
No mourner graced them with a tear,
No funeral bell toll'd solemnly.”

I visited the English and Scotch churches in Kingston: from the steeple of the former, I had a most delightful and extensive prospect of the city, the plains around it, the amphitheatre of mountains, and the magnificent harbour. It is a useful memorandum for travellers, on first arriving in a town, always to mount to the highest point in it, so as to have a general idea of the topography; and afterwards to visit the theatre, if there is one, to have a general idea of the inhabitants. The English church in Kingston is handsomely fitted up—gilding and scarlet in profusion, with marble monuments. The Scotch is a neat circular building, but was what they call “a whistling kirk,” that is, had the advantage of an organ. Some of my puritanical countrymen think this a scandalous innovation, and that musical instruments of any kind are an abomination in the church service, forgetting at the same time that “it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto his name upon an instrument of ten strings, upon the psaltery, and upon the harp with a solemn sound.”

I visited the markets, where there was the usual display of fish, flesh, and fowl, fruits and vegetables. I then visited the hospital for whites, and re-

marked that the patients were extremely crowded, and very little attention was paid to cleanliness. I saw a young lady labouring under confluent small-pox, miserably accommodated. I then visited the gaol; in the outer court were the debtors, in the second the felons, and in the third were the condemned cells; but though there were eighty incarcerated altogether, yet there had been no execution in Kingston for seven years—which speaks volumes in favour of the population.

I next stayed two hours in the native school, and had a long conversation with Mr. Reid, an enthusiastic teacher and intelligent man, on the different systems for developing the faculties of youth; the system of Witherspoon, for infants, I saw tried here with success, and that of Wood, or the interrogatory system. In the boasted parish-schools in Scotland, I have often remarked, that if the children read a chapter in the Bible with tolerable fluency, they were considered perfect scholars. Wood's admirable system is to make them not only read fluently, but also perfectly to understand, by cross questioning and oral instruction, every syllable they read. When children are taught foreign languages, which ought never to be attempted till they thoroughly understand their own, and can compose in it with facility, the Hamiltonian system, with interlinear translations, (whatever opposition it may receive from teachers interested in retarding the progress of youth), I know from experience to be a royal short and

easy road to the acquisition of any tongue. Give a youth a taste for learning by a rapid acquirement, in the first instance, of a vocabulary (as it were) of words on the Hamiltonian plan, and then teach the grammar. It is the same thing in music or drawing: if a child is kept at the gamut for weeks, it gets a distaste for music; but teach it to play or sing a simple air by any mechanical means, and what was before disagreeable, becomes a delight: again, if a child is kept sketching eyes, and mouths, and fingers, for a long time, it will naturally detest drawing; but teach it to draw a little figure, and it will return eventually to the detail or grammar with satisfaction.

I was anxious to visit Spanish Town, or St. Iago de la Vega, the ancient capital in the interior, also to see some of the estates, and to ascend some of the mountain ranges; so one morning I mounted in company with a Mr. Freckleton, and rode out of Kingston in the direction of Spanish Town, to the westward. On either side of the road, hedged with logwood, were pleasant houses, at intervals, with trees and gardens about them; and a few planters from the country passed us, behind whom were riding servants with leather portmanteaus strapped on their saddles. There were some old silk-cotton-trees by the road side, under which negroes coming into town were reposing in groups; and then we came to a great lagoon, or salt marsh, at which there was an inn called the Ferry-house.

The smell arising from the lagoon was heavy and

sepulchral ; the breeze which swept over it seemed loaded with deadly fever, and there were a few miserable-looking negroes fishing in places clear of weeds. In passing through it on a raised road, and sensible of the murky pestilential atmosphere I breathed, I was reminded of those jungles in some parts of India, in travelling through which for some days, or even hours, one may contract a fever which it will be impossible ever to shake off ; and again, I thought this dreadful lagoon, within seven miles of Kingston, was like some parts of Guinea, where the country is altogether uncultivated, overflowed with water, “ surrounded with thick impenetrable woods, and overrun with slime ; where the air is so vitiated, noisome and thick, that torches and candles burn dim, and seem ready to be extinguished, and even the human voice loses its natural tone.”

After a short stay at the Ferry-house, we turned off to the right, and rode up a valley with high rocks on either side, and ancient fig-trees with bush-ropes hanging from their branches, and aloes and torch-thistles beneath them. We ascended for some hours winding round the face of hills, and after a scrambling, and in some places dangerous ride, we arrived at what is called a coffee mountain. The beautiful coffee and pimento plants were set round the summit, and on a level plateau was the manager's house, with barbiques or terraces for drying the pods, and the pulper-mill in which the berries are detached. A little below

this were the negro huts, with gardens about them, and palms overhanging them ; it was a perfect picture of a mountain plantation, and I enjoyed it the more as the heat, which in Kingston was 90°, was now at six in the evening at 70°.

I partook of mountain fare with the manager, coffee and plantains, and attempted to read before going to bed, but a squadron of bats flew into my room, dashed against my face, extinguished and upset my light ; and though I attempted to make play with a short stick, and not a few drank the sherbet of death, yet at last I was fairly driven under the quilt. A bat is a most unpleasant visiter at all times, and especially in a sleeping-room between the tropics, where they are so large, have such sharp teeth, and really delight in human blood.

I rose at five in the morning to enjoy a most glorious prospect from an elevated peak of the mountain, where it is possible to see nearly across the island, forty miles in breadth. A vast chain of mountains run east and west throughout the length of Jamaica ; the country on the north side of the island (one hundred and fifty miles long) rises at some distance from the sea into gentle hills, with broad valleys between them ; the face of nature being clad in a bright vesture of green, with scattered groves, and abundantly watered with silver streams. Nearer the centre of the island are vast forests, dark and dense, and rising up the side of the mountains, which lose themselves in the clouds at the height of eight thousand feet above the level

of the sea. Looking towards the south, I saw the great plain of Liguanea and Kingston near the sea, and saw how inaccessible the capital is to foreign foes. The range of mountains on which I stood, formed a semicircle behind Kingston, and fell suddenly into the sea on its left, where Rock Fort guarded the narrow pass; then on the right was the great lagoon, far more impenetrable than the marshes of New Orleans, and running up from the sea to the base of the mountains, so that no enemy could approach by land, except after overcoming countless natural obstacles, neither could he approach by sea, for the guns of Port Royal would sink any fleet that attempted to pass into the harbour formed by the long spit of the palisades.

After enjoying myself for some time on the highlands of Liguanea, breathing a pure air, and feeling enlivened and spiritualized as it were, as all do when raised above the gross vapours of the plains and the still grosser and insatiable pursuits of lucre, I descended and rode towards Spanish Town. After passing some sugar-estates and cattle-pens, and crossing an iron bridge over the Cobré river, I rode through many dull streets, in which there were few moving objects, and then came suddenly on a handsome square, in which were the palace of the Governor, the courts and public offices, and in an open temple a statue of Lord Howe. After a survey of the town and public buildings, which I need not stop to describe, I returned to Kingston.

Lord Belmore, the Captain-General, did not re-

side in his palace at Spanish Town, but at a country-house some distance off, in one of those healthy situations so abundant in this rich and favoured isle ; where, if the heat of the plains debilitates the frame, the mountain is at hand where the fruits of Europe flourish, and where a blanket may be used throughout the year. "May the graves of those be defiled, and their fathers burnt," who wish to cut off this island from the possessions of our noble country !

Whoever has heard of M. le Comte Forbin, Directeur-General des Musées en France, must remember the dreadful blow which Lord and Lady Belmore, when travelling in Egypt, unwittingly inflicted on the sensitive feelings of M. le Comte. According to his own story, Forbin (making mountains of mole-hills and oceans of rivulets) had succeeded with great difficulty in reaching Thebes, and was revelling, like Marius at Carthage, in all the luxury of meditation on the revolutions of the past, as exemplified by the stupendous ruins which were piled around him ; when, "figurez son-étonnement," on seeing tripping along the banks of the Nile, unconscious of the classic soil on which she trod being contaminated by her presence, "une femme de chambre Anglaise, portante un parasol vert et habillée en spencer couleur de rose !" This dreadful apparition, it appeared, was an attendant upon Lady Belmore, who was returning from Nubia. In a moment it dispelled all the Count's glorious visions of the past, and despairing of being able to

gain any scientific knowledge where there were English *femmes-de-chambre*, he returned from whence he came, to Cairo. Now, that is the Count's version of this affair; hear another, and judge which is the true one, discriminating reader. Lord Belmore certainly met M. Forbin at Thebes, but her Ladyship and all the females of her party had laid aside European dresses and adopted the Turkish, as better suited to the climate, and rendering the wearers less objects of remark than if they were attired in their usual manner; consequently the "spencer couleur de rose" was an invention of Forbin's flowery pen. However, Forbin considering, as men usually do who, after passing their meridian, for the first time "take the road," that he had performed miracles in travelling as far as Thebes, on finding that ladies had penetrated into Nubia, and thought his journey but a very trivial one, felt unwilling to encounter the fatigues of a longer tour when he could not boast of being the first explorer of those regions, and so preferred returning to La Belle France, and talking of what he did and what he did not see.

But in Egypt there is really much to disgust a romantic traveller. Conceive his indignation on reading, in large letters, the name of a celebrated London quack in the catacombs; or "Warren's Blacking, 30, Strand," on the pyramid of Cheops. The hand that produced this miserable wit was probably directed by a mind belonging to that class who disgrace the *order* of travellers. I remember

one of these who had been “a young man about town,” and who had travelled in Georgia and Persia; he was met in South Russia dressed in a swallow-tailed coat and tightish continuations, and was asked what he had seen, “Oh! d—d barren countries; I went to the Caspian, and saw the fires at Bakoo, (where were the altars of the Guebres, or fire-worshippers,) but you may see as good any day when they light the gas in Piccadilly.” Now M. le Comte Forbin, I am sure, would willingly have assisted in ducking this character for presuming to visit scenes hallowed by historical recollections of surpassing interest, and after all affecting to treat them lightly.

CHAPTER XIX.

Summary account of the treatment of Slaves under British Masters.—A proud Reflection.—West Indians harshly judged.—The Soil of the British West India Islands is not utterly exhausted.—The Writer expresses his regret.—Real state of Negroes has been often described.—Comforts, labour, and punishments, of the Slaves.—How the friends of Negroes ought to act.—Unsuccessful Experiments.—Superior class of Managers and Overseers.—Negroes sometimes refuse freedom.—The members of Anti-slavery Societies.—Are Negroes to be exempt from labour?—Effects of violent Emancipation in St. Domingo.—Violent language, used by a Clergyman.—Formerly Slaves were much attached to their Masters.—Negro Preachers.—Last year was a fatal one for West India Proprietors.—A common-sense View of Slavery ought to be taken.—Advice to the Colonists.

It is a proud reflection for a Briton, that England was the last to engage in the slave-trade, and the first to abandon it ; and that, to induce other nations also to abandon it, and to suppress, by every means in her power, the unhallowed traffic, she has expended men and treasure to a great amount. The feelings of the nation being decidedly adverse to slavery, it is impossible to believe that many of her sons, though holding slaves, will wantonly ill use them, or consider it justifiable to hold them in hopeless bondage from father to son. They do not—but, of late years, the West India proprietors have been constantly held up to scorn and reproach, and

it has been gravely stated by the leaders of the faction with which they have to contend, that since they have possessed slaves for many years, and enjoyed the fruits of their labours, they should now emancipate them without compensation; in other words, reduce themselves to the state of paupers. Already the increasing agitation of the slave question has caused the loss of confidence with the merchant, (who supplies stores for estates and receives the produce,) and the great depreciation of property.

The soil of the British West India Islands is *not* utterly exhausted, as some people wish to make it appear to be. True, Barbadoes and some of the longest settled islands do not raise the heavy crops of cane they used to do; still with the assistance of manure they produce good crops, and if more attention were paid to draining swamps, these verdant and picturesque islands might be rendered perfectly healthy, and Elysian retreats for those who have been harshly used by fortune in the mother country. They will always produce abundantly the necessaries of life; and as to the islands of Trinidad and British Guiana, they are yet but very partially cultivated, and surpass in fertility any part of the British possessions, not excepting the fruitful valley of the Ganges.

But it is now to be stated how negroes are treated by British planters, since we have endeavoured to show how hard their fate is when subjected to other masters; however, before I summarily de-

scribe the present condition of British slaves, I must express my unfeigned regret at having been obliged to expose the conduct of Christian people in treating of slaves under Dutch, Portuguese, and French masters; I shall afterwards have occasion to describe the condition of Spanish and American slaves. It is considered a proof of an uncharitable disposition to take pleasure in lowering the character of our neighbours, and I have submitted the statements in Chapter V. to the public with the greatest reluctance, a sense of duty alone compelling me to do it, for I do not see how I can better serve my country and the British colonists in the west, than by giving a comparative state of Transatlantic slavery; and I will not shrink from the task which I have voluntarily undertaken, whatever construction may be put on my motives.

Many books, and pamphlets without number, have been written, to show that the negroes in the British West India Islands, as far as creature-comforts (to use a homely phrase) are concerned, are infinitely better off than the bulk of the labourers and mechanics in Great Britain and Ireland. Churches and schools are now seen everywhere throughout the West Indies, and I have heard planters say, that they imagine the only check on the slaves rising and massacring the whites is, "that they are prevented by religion being so extensively diffused among them." It is the interest of the planter to use his servants well, and public opinion, if he is not actuated by conscientious mo-

tives, prevents his opposing the mental instruction of his negroes; so that, in general, British slaves are comfortably clothed, well fed, well lodged, not over-worked, lightly punished, (now commonly with the tread-mill,) have the best medical advice, often the half of Saturday and always the whole of Sunday; and many schools are preparing the rising generation for gradual and eventual emancipation—What more is required?

Those who wish well to the slaves might employ their money to great advantage, by subscribing to establish more schools than there are at present for young negroes, where they could also be taught trades; and if they would assist the planters (who have been impoverished by the outcry that has been raised against them) to build churches and support their clergymen, they would effectually promote the cause of philanthropy and religion.

I will now give a proof of the difficulty of regenerating adult negroes, who have been for some time slaves. Miss Frances Wright, a lady of Scotch parentage, but now an American citizen, and lately a peripatetic lecturer on popular education, &c. some time ago gave much attention to the subject of American negro slavery, and attempted experiments in behalf of her coloured brethren. She saw that negro slavery was the great stain on the national honour of the States, and for four years, in the most disinterested manner, devoted her time and fortune to a race who seemed to be “outcast from hope;” she purchased a tract of

land near Memphis, on the Mississippi, and several coloured families, and hoped by means of her people, “to evince the practicability of making their labour work out the price of their emancipation :” but she was miserably deceived. Her negroes were very comfortably fed, clothed, and lodged, were fat and sleek, but like the free negroes of Antigua, as described by Coleridge, intolerably idle and dissipated, so that at last, in 1829, their benevolent mistress, harassed into illness by over-exertion, repeated disappointments, and great loss of property, removed them to Hayti, and there gave them their freedom, fearing that, if manumitted in the States, they might be kidnapped, and return to their original bondage. Several New Orleans planters complained to me, that it was a great pity to see such able-bodied people leave the country when there was so great a demand for slave labour ; of course, I heartily condoled with them !

The difficulty of finding employment for young men of respectability at home, causes many of a superior class to visit the West Indies, to obtain the situation of manager, or overseer, on estates. Formerly Europeans, of low caste, were employed on estates, from whose ignorance and unfeeling disposition not much lenity might be expected towards the slaves ; but the case is now altered.

I have seen slavery in the East Indies and in Russia, besides having just viewed it in various parts of the West, and was summoned to give evi-

dence on the Slave question before a Committee of the House of Lords, therefore I ought to know something about it,—and really I cannot conceive a situation more comfortable for a human being who has never tasted freedom, and whose mind is uncultivated, than that of negroes under British masters in the West Indies : every thing is found them, and “ they have no care for the morrow.” Negroes, above forty years of age, constantly refuse freedom when it is offered them, “ because,” they say, “ we are unable to take care of ourselves.” Little, therefore, can be done for the present race of adult negroes ; their progeny only ought to be prepared for manumission.

No one has a higher esteem than the writer, for the great mass of those who join anti-slavery societies : their motives are excellent, but they are led to give their sanction to unwise and even cruel measures, by fanatics, individuals interested in a different market from that of the West Indies, or by the ambitious, who merely use the slave question as a handle to popularity. To ask the proprietors of negroes to emancipate their slaves without compensation, is as reasonable a request as to solicit the fundholders to give up their capital for the payment of the national debt. Let the abolitionists place themselves in the situation of the planters, and then ask themselves how they would act.

Are negroes to be exempted from the common lot of humanity—labour ? “ No,” reply the abo-

litionists, “ but they ought to labour for their own support, not to enrich their master.” Very true; but first give them the inclination and means to support themselves by instruction, mental and manual, and then emancipate them. What have been the effects of violent emancipation in St. Domingo? — agriculture and commerce nearly at an end; murder and debauchery stalking hand in hand through that fertile island; and at this moment the heads of departments are not negroes, but men of colour.

No feasible or well-digested plan has yet been proposed for emancipating negro slaves. The present enlightened Government, which is strongly inclined to act with a liberal policy to all, is confused with the wild clamour for immediate manumission of slavery; and so unfeeling and senseless are the most violent of the abolitionists, that a minister of the Gospel declared publicly at an anti-slavery meeting a short time ago :—“ In order that the negroes may be instantly freed, I care not if the blood of the whites flow in streams, and England lose all the colonies where human beings are held in bondage.” Such was the language of a preacher of peace!

Still, I confess that on one or two occasions I was also provoked by exhibitions of great perversion of feeling on the part of slave-owners; men who inveighed against all protection of slaves by Government; who said that fourteen or fifteen hours of daily labour were nothing to slaves; that

the planters were the best judges of the number of holidays to give their people; that bondage in the West Indies, under an European master, was a great advance towards civilization; that the slaves, by being placed under Europeans, had an example set them to imitate, and that, without any other trouble being taken with them, they would gradually but surely be prepared for emancipation, or at least their children would. No doubt, those who talked in this way were provoked by the nonsense spoken by their opponents, and there is some apology for them; but there were few who expressed themselves as above, or who used insulting language towards Great Britain.

Formerly it was gratifying to see the interest which the sable retainers in a family took in the affairs of their master and mistress. The mansion, and every thing appertaining to it was entrusted to their care, and they were faithful to their charge; since, however, certain "busy bodies, meddling with the concerns of others to do good," have commenced their operations, the former race of domestics has been converted into one, the individuals of which think it their duty to cheat, rob, and even murder their proprietors. It was only in September last that fifty white women and children in Virginia were massacred in cold blood by negroes.

The writer is not one of those who maintain that negroes are naturally inferior beings, and ought to be treated as such. He has listened with wonder and delight to negro preachers, and seen

negroes labouring hard, under every disadvantage, to learn to read; whoever, therefore, advocates perpetual slavery for his African brethren, from father to son, is a monster in human shape.

This year has been particularly fatal to the West Indies; dreadful hurricanes have passed over them, with destruction on their wings, and ruined thousands. In June we saw Barbadoes smiling with pleasant residences, shadowed by the richest tropical foliage, and the whole island cultivated like a beautiful garden: in August it was lying waste and desolate. A fearful hurricane, exceeding in violence the great storm of 1780, had swept across it, like the breath of the destroying angel; the sound of lamentation was heard on every side, and the air was loaded with corruption from thousands of men and beasts violently deprived of life under the ruins of their habitations. Then came the revolt and burnings in Jamaica.

But I must draw towards a conclusion. Since we have endeavoured to show that foreigners have done little or nothing to ameliorate the condition of their slaves, while British proprietors have done, and are doing, all in their power to render their situation comfortable; it might be suggested to those who are continually looking abroad with "telescopic eye," to take down the glass for a time, and contemplate with their "natural optics" the state of our suffering population in the "old country;" or if they will meddle with West India affairs, let them take a common-sense view of the

question of slavery, and discuss it with feelings of charity and Christian benevolence towards their countrymen, who depend for subsistence on the beautiful isles of the Antilles.

One word to the colonists. In submitting a plain statement of your case to the government, the use of intemperate language will not be advisable, and to threaten separation from the mother country is madness, which would eventually, if effected, be bitterly repented of; for as long as Britain maintains her naval superiority, it would be vain for islands to attempt to detach themselves from her. Stand by your native land, then, at all risks, and bear up patiently a little longer against the tide which strives to overwhelm you. Your grievances will doubtless be listened to by the paternal government of a Monarch who is in truth the father of his people, and eventually ample justice will be rendered you. In the mean time, do not give way to despondency, but buoy yourselves up with the *spes melioris avi*—the hope of better times.

CHAPTER XX.

Sail in his Majesty's frigate *Blanche* for Cuba.—Jamaica by Moonlight.—The Pedro Plains.—Trial of skill between the *Blanche* and *Shannon*.—The great Cayman.—Cape St. Antonio.—Heavy Gales.—The iron-bound coast of Cuba.—A fragrant Breeze.—Exciting anticipations.—The Moro Castle.—The Punta.—The Harbour and City of Havannah.—The Salute.—Land.—Characters on the Quay.—The Plaza de Armas.—Wait on the Captain-General.—Leave Havannah.—Slave Ships.—Drive to Guanabacoa.—A *Volante*.—Cuba Roads.—The Country.—His Britannic Majesty's Commissioner.—Panoramic View.—Murders in Ferry-boats.—Police of Havannah.—Moorish Scene.—Pleasant situation for English Ladies.—The Cathedral.—The Tomb of Columbus.—Reflections.—A Relic.

Hrs Majesty's frigate *Blanche*, 44 guns, commanded by Commodore Farquhar, K.C.B., an officer highly distinguished in his country's service, was proceeding to the Havannah, and I was kindly offered a passage in her; accordingly, on a calm night in the end of July, I placed my baggage in a canoe, and was paddled down the harbour of Kingston to Port Royal.

The sea reposed in beauty in the moonlight, but a dark canopy of clouds hung over the mountains of Jamaica; the sky wore a portentous aspect, for it was the hurricane season; men-of-war and merchantmen were flying for safety to more secure

ports than those exposed to the influence of these awful tempests. After an hour's voyage I came alongside the noble frigate; I trod her silent decks, and then turned into a cot in an airy berth, congratulating myself on my good fortune.

We weighed anchor at four in the morning, with the Shannon in company; stood to the westward, and passed before long the singular rocks called the White Horses, the Pedro Shoals, and Pedro Bluff. Behind this last are beautiful undulating plains of dark red soil, covered luxuriantly with herbage, with clumps of trees dispersed over them; here thousands of cattle and horses graze. It is said, that for beauty of prospect, for purity and dryness of air, and a climate exempt from either extremes of heat and cold, the Pedro Plains of Jamaica may vie with any spot on the habitable globe.

The two frigates held on their way leisurely, with a five-knot breeze, and a trial of skill took place between the respective crews in the evening; all hands were piped to reef topsails, in a moment the shrouds were covered with active and eager young fellows, waiting for the command "away aloft;" when given, they sprang on the yards, drew up with vigorous arm the heavy canvass, reefed it, and then slid down on deck, quick as lightning: we beat the Shannon.

Next day we saw the Great Cayman Island, long and low, thirty miles by six, covered with wood, dotted with houses, and containing three thousand

inhabitants. We stood towards it for turtle, and saw the wreck of a brig on shore ; then half-a-dozen canoes came off, with mulatto and negro crews, bringing with them turtle of all sizes at seven pence the pound, pigs, fowls, and variegated shell. After making what purchases we wanted, we steered a north north-west course, and the Shannon left us for Honduras.

We had pleasant breezes till we reached Cape St. Antonio, in Cuba, and then we had some heavy gales, when we turned our head to the eastward : the topsails were closely reefed, the gallant ship pitched heavily in the troubled sea, and the green waves came rolling in over her bows. It looked as if there was to be a repetition of the peril in which the *Blanche* had been placed last year nearly in the same place—the dreaded entrance of the Gulf of Floridas. Then she lost all her masts by the board, some hands were washed out of her, and the crew were proceeding to throw the guns overboard, when the gale moderated.

With considerable difficulty we approached the north coast of Cuba, after a week's sail from Jamaica, and saw it stretching out low and flat, with palm trees waving in the sea-breeze and some hills of no great elevation in the interior. We neared the rocky shore, and observed the solitary huts of the free coloured people scattered about in the country, near patches of maize and groups of palm, tamarind, and orange trees ; and on the right of the picture was the light-house tower of

the Moro Castle, at the entrance of the harbour of the Havannah.

We lay off and on from the dawn till the sea-breeze set in; the gentle gale which was wafted towards us over the land was loaded with a spicy and exotic fragrance, recalling to mind the air scented with the sweet odours of Araby the blest.

“ See yon fair groves that over Yemen rise,
And with their spicy breath embalm the skies,
Where every breeze sheds incense o’er the vales,
And every shrub the scent of musk exhales.”

Several other vessels lay near us, like the expectants at the pool of Bethesda; at last the fresh and steady breeze, driving before it fleecy clouds, wooed our sails, and we steered for the celebrated Moro.

I could not help feeling much pleasing excitement at the prospect before me; I was about to see the most important and interesting city in the West Indies, the key of the glorious island of Cuba, which is within an eighth as large as England: I was about to view a city which, on account of its noble harbour and favourable site for commerce, has accumulated great wealth, and is peopled by a strange mixture of inhabitants: I was about to visit the head-quarters and grand rendezvous of pirates and slavery: I was about to witness the scene of the triumph of the arms of England, when the island fell before the prowess of our troops in 1762; and, above all, I was about to stand beside the bones of the great Columbus.

We reached the long and narrow entrance of the harbour, widening out into a basin capable of containing a thousand men of war, and passed close under the guns and rock of the Moro. High over the massive walls and battlements waved the golden and red standard of Spain, and many gay pennants fluttered from no fewer than four signal staffs, bespeaking the great number of vessels that were crowding to the rich western mart.

On the opposite side of the entrance of the harbour was the castle of the Punta, a regular work of four bastions, also mounting heavy guns; and on looking up we saw, on each side of the long entrance to the harbour, battery behind battery, and then the walls of the city itself. The shipping was thus completely secure against a hostile fleet, for only one vessel can enter at a time, and a fleet attempting to pass would be sunk in detail.

Over the walls were seen the gay and crowded buildings of the city, white houses and deep red roofs, pillar and pinnacle, terrace and balcony, towers and domes, intermixed with trees which rose in picturesque confusion; on every church a flag was displayed, and the bells sent forth their peals, for it was a saint's day. Immediately in front, were seen the masts of two hundred merchantmen, lying with their bows to the wharfs, for there was not room for them otherwise; and tent boats with painted canvass awnings, and others loaded to the gunwale with the most delicious fruit of every variety, approached us as we dropped our anchor under the Moro.

A voice from the watch-tower above then hailed us, and demanded our nation, and from whence we came; and then the Spanish soldiers, with their dark complexions and high caps, crowded on the parapets to gaze at the English man-of-war, which fired a salute of fifteen guns in compliment to the Spanish Admiral (Saborde). The custom-house cutter, and then the health-boat, came alongside with negro crews, and the national flag at the stern; and though we had come from Jamaica, in which the small-pox was raging, we were not prevented from landing.

I put on my uniform, and accompanied one of the Lieutenants on shore, to wait on the Captain-General (Vives), and announce the arrival of the frigate. We pulled up to the custom-house quay, and the moment we stepped on shore, we found ourselves in the midst of a bustling scene. The wharfs were crowded with piles of merchandize and barrels of provisions; crowds of half naked blacks, shouting and singing, were loading and unloading the vessels; shipowners and shipmasters were standing in groups, with broad-brimmed Panama hats, and striped linen coats, talking of sugar, coffee, and flour; the fumes of cigars rose on every side, particularly from the seamen out of employ, and I thought I could detect a pirate or two, or the captain of a slaver walking about, regarding with piercing eye the men who might be fit instruments for their unholy purpose.

A portly personage addressed us in broken Eng-

lish, and asked if we wished to wait on Governor Vives; we replied in the affirmative, and he offered to conduct us to his palace. We followed him through a narrow street, where our olfactories were saluted with the odour of jerked or dried beef, and fish imported for the sustenance of the blacks, and then found ourselves in a handsome square, called the Plaza de Armas. The buildings which surrounded it were lofty and substantial; verandahs ran along their front, and the roofs were concealed by parapets, on which were rows of urns. The centre of the square was laid out in walks between flowering shrubs, and the whole air of the place inspired the idea of wealth and luxury.

The Governor's palace occupied one side of the square, and we passed through its lower piazza, occupied as an exchange by the merchants; whence, receiving from the guards in blue and silver uniform a salute, we ascended a broad marble staircase, and entered a suite of apartments, the walls of which were painted in the Moorish style, with wreaths of flowers, recalling to mind the glorious Alhambra. In an inner chamber, on the walls of which hung portraits of the different governors of the Havannah, and two large historical paintings, one representing Columbus' first landing in Cuba to plant the cross and perform mass, the other Cortes burning his ships, to show his followers that there was no retreat for them from Mexico, we found General Vives. He was seated on a gilded sofa, and rose to receive us; he was a short, stout

man, with grey hair and dark complexion, and wore a common shupa, or coat, of blue and white striped gingham, white waistcoat and trowsers. Beside him were his two daughters, charming little *Señoritas*, in yellow gowns, and high tortoise-shell combs.

The General was very polite, said he should be happy to receive Commodore Farquhar, and, after a good deal of discussion about a complimentary salute, we took leave. I had an introduction to Mr. Macleay, his Britannic Majesty's Commissioner in Cuba for the adjudication of slaves; he lived in the country, some distance from Havannah, and his secretary and assistant, Mr. Jackson, a young man of excellent ability and most gentlemanly manners, kindly offered to take me with him; we accordingly stepped into a boat and rowed across the broad harbour. We passed three Spanish men-of-war, apparently in good order, for Admiral Saborde has a high character, both as a man and as a naval officer, and saw under the walls of Casa Blanca (white castle) the long and rakish-looking black hulls of numerous slavers. It is here they fit out with perfect impunity, and with the knowledge of the authorities; and I could not help reflecting what a mockery it was in the Spaniards agreeing to abolish the slave-trade, when here I saw it openly permitted. Twenty-four pounder carronades peeped from the ports of the slavers, and long eighteen pounders, or swivels, were amidships. They were schooner-rigged, and were mostly built after the

model of the Baltimore clippers, the fastest vessels in the world, with masts like the ears of a vicious horse thrown back on its neck.

We landed at Regla, on the opposite side of the harbour to the capital, and a mile and a half from it. Regla is the Blackwall of Havannah, situated on a low and swampy shore, and inhabited by pirates, slavers, and vagabonds of all kinds. We then took our seat in a volante, to drive to Guanabacoa, the summer resort of the aristocracy of Havannah. A volante is one of the most singular vehicles I ever saw; the body of it is like that of a large cabriolet slung on leathers; enormous wheels as high as the hood of the machine, are at one end of the shaft, and the horse is yoked to the other end, some distance from the body, which swings between them. In the city volante, the negro postilion sits on the horse between the shafts; but in the one we mounted, he rode on an additional horse attached to an outrigger on the near side. Our Calasero was a most singular figure; on his head he wore a straw hat a yard high; a blue hussar jacket with gold lace covered his upper man, and his legs were cased in jack-boots, with a pair of massive silver spurs. Seated on the volante, we were skreened from the glare by a blue curtain in front. We drove through Regla at a rapid rate, and soon ascertained the meaning of the high wheels of the conveyance.

The roads or tracks in Cuba are quite in a natural state, that is, they are not made or repaired;

the only regulation regarding them is, that they shall be sixteen yards wide. Here, they were furrowed in gullies by the rains ; and there, huge rocks lay upon them. We descended and ascended these impediments in safety, owing to our peculiar wheels ; and even in the streets of Regla, where an English carriage could not have advanced ten yards without upsetting, we dashed over the ruts, and sunk into the mud to the axle with perfect impunity.

The country round the Havannah was once covered with *ingenios*, or plantations ; but the old soil being exhausted, the fresh soil of the interior is now sought, on which to raise sugar and coffee. The landscape on each side of the road was therefore bare, and was covered with scanty vegetation, with occasional patches of maize and palm trees, in groups. Our road was gently ascending till we reached the rocky site of Guanabacoa. The houses on each side of the street (which was altogether unpaved) were whitewashed—two-storied buildings, without much pretensions to architectural beauty. On the outskirts of the town we reached the delightful casa occupied by Mr. Macleay. We entered a court in which was a small and beautiful flower-garden, then ascended a marble staircase to a broad verandah, and in a cool apartment surrounded with books and newspapers, sat his Britannic Majesty's commissioner.

I dined with Mr. Macleay, partaking of Spanish olios, fricassees and fricandeaux, washed down with French claret, and then admired the noble pano-

ramic view from the top of his house. On the right of the picture, at the distance of two miles, was Fort Coxemar, where Admiral Sir George Pocock landed the English army in 1762. The ridge on which we stood was then occupied by the Spaniards, drawn up in battle array. Lord Albemarle advanced towards them, defeated them, made Guanabacoa his head quarters, and then broke ground before the Moro, which, with the harbour, city, and a deadly mangrove swamp, were in the centre of the picture. Beyond the Havannah was the strong fort called El Principe, on an eminence ; and on a hill on the extreme left, was a most interesting relic, a cross, said to have been erected by Columbus.

I received an invitation from Mr. Macleay to re-visit him after I had seen “ *les curiosités de la ville,*” and we returned in the evening to Regla. Here we got into a heavy-sailing passage-boat, to cross over to the city, and paid a media, or three-pence, for our passage. We had Spaniards, male and female, on board ; mulattoes, and negroes ; and I was told that it is no uncommon thing for the crews of these boats to murder and rob their passengers in the evening.

We reached the wharf in safety, and Mr. Jackson most kindly offering me a room in his house, I accepted his proffered civility, and we walked toward his casa, through the narrow streets, which in Havannah, after dusk, is really a perilous undertaking. We passed some slaves bearing lanterns according to regulation, and a few dons, each of

whom was armed with sword and dagger. They kept the middle of the way, and curled round us when we neared them; truly an agreeable state of society where one walks in momentary dread of assassinations. We saw neither police nor watchmen.

The Arabian Nights were forcibly re-called to mind, when I viewed the houses of the wealthy. They were two-storied, and built on the plan of a hollow quadrangle, with a patio or court yard, and galleries, round the interior; the front was plain stone, painted white, blue, or yellow. In the arched door-way was the volante, and a few black domestics sat under the lamps smoking, singing, or talking. Shrubs were dimly seen in the garden beyond, or a marble fountain, near which

“ A mantling vine
His curling tendrils wove with amorous twine;
From the green stalks the glowing clusters hung,
Like rubies on a thread of emeralds strung.”

Here one could “ scatter roses of delight, and quaff wine of pleasure from goblets of bliss.”

The other houses we passed were of one story, with immense iron-barred windows, enabling us to see the whole apartment within. As the vesper-bell tolled, the women, dressed in white, rose from their rocking chairs at the window, and repeated their prayers before a picture of the Virgin, then drew the curtains of their windows, and retired to rest on their folding canvass cots.

We walked through many streets without interruption, and found Mrs. Jackson sitting in an anxious state for the return of her husband. She as well as the only other English lady in Havannah, (Mrs. Norman,) told me that, whenever their husbands are out of an evening, they sit in fear and trembling, dreading to see a corpse brought home to them, murder is so frequent in this city. After a light repast, I retired to my room, but, excited on finding myself a sojourner in such a remarkable place as Havannah, it was some time before I could compose myself to sleep; like one moon-struck, I gazed on the churches and houses, clearly revealed by the rays of the Cynthian queen, and then turned to the harbour, on the water of which her beams were playing. I heard no sounds of serenading, but only two negroes below my window, talking in an under-tone, perhaps, I thought, watching to assassinate some unfortunate individual.

I rose at an early hour, and hastened to the tomb of Columbus. The cathedral in which his precious remains are deposited occupies one side of a small square. The exterior of the building is of massive stone, of no particular order of architecture; its gable rises in a pyramidal shape; on the apex is a cross, and on either side are towers; pillars adorn the building, and behind these hired assassins frequently lurk. I passed into the body of the church, and was struck with its grandeur and simplicity. The roof was arched and very lofty, and Saxon arches enclosed the aisles. The

whole was tastefully painted in imitation of grey marble, and there were none of the gaudy colours and tinsel decorations which are too often met with in Catholic churches.

Exquisite paintings were disposed here and there round the walls; one was the announcement to Sarah, by the angel, of her miraculous conception; another, our Saviour conversing with the woman of Samaria at the well; whilst in the same were representations of Moses, the Prophets, and the Evangelists. The principal altar, at the upper end, was chastely and richly ornamented. Within the railing was a mosaic floor of marble, and the seats of the dignitaries were highly carved. Looking to the left, I saw a slab of white marble let into the wall; this was the monument of Columbus, and as there was only a single priest in the cathedral, we obtained his permission to approach the tomb.

I was under the influence of no ordinary sensations on finding myself in so interesting a situation. I stood beside the mouldering bones of the most intrepid mariner who ever lived, one who "first had the judgment to divine, and the intrepidity to brave, the mysteries of the perilous deep which divides the Old World from the New, and who, by his hardy genius, his inflexible constancy, and his heroic courage, brought the ends of the earth into communication with each other." He must be dull and insensible, indeed, who could contemplate the final resting-place of the great Colon, without being powerfully affected, and with-



16 Restos e imagen del grande Colón!
MH siglos durad guardados en la Vraa:
Ven la remembrança de nuestro Nation.

out sympathising deeply in the sorrows and sufferings of his latter days.

It was strange to reflect on the wanderings of Columbus, not only while alive, but even after death. First his body was deposited in the church of Santa Maria de la Antigua in Valladolid, in 1506; then removed to the Monastery of Las Cuevas, in Seville, in 1513; again it was taken up, and, with the remains of his son Diego, was transported to Hispaniola, and deposited in the cathedral of the city of St. Domingo in 1536. When the Spanish possessions in Hayti were ceded to the French in 1795, his remains, "consisting of a number of bones and a quantity of mould, evidently the remains of a human body," were exhumed, and conveyed in a gilded leaden case with great pomp and ceremony, on board ship on the 15th of January 1796. The ship Lorenzo arrived at the Havannah, and the remains were conveyed on shore with great reverence, in the presence of the chief authorities, and deposited in the wall on the right of the grand altar; and lately the marble monument had been placed in front of the leaden case.

The effigy of Columbus is in mezzo rilievo, and represents him with a long visage, prominent straight nose, curled hair, full eyebrows and moustaches; round his neck is a double ruff, and his wrist is similarly ornamented. His body is cased in armour to the waist; a scarf is thrown across the breast, and the fore-finger of the right hand points to America on a globe. Naval emblems are

below the half-length of "the worthy and adventurous General of the Seas," consisting of a cannon, rudder, anchor, oar, quadrant, compass, sand-glass, &c. and in the midst of these the following inscription :

" Restos e Imager del Grande Colon,
Mil siglos durad guardados in la urna
Y in remembranza de nuestra nacion !"

Remains and image of the Great Columbus,
A thousand ages continue preserved in the urn,
And in the remembrance of our nation !

The enthusiastic biographer of Columbus, Washington Irving, had been most kind to me in giving me many introductions to his friends in America, and I was anxious to obtain some relic from the tomb to present to him. But "Let the hand of the man who ever attempts to mutilate or efface it be withered." I would not have done it for the wealth of Potosi, but I was fortunate enough to observe a small fragment of wood which lay under the slab, but in no way connected with it, and seizing it with the avidity of an antiquary, I bore it off in triumph.

CHAPTER XXI.

Population of Havannah.—The People in the Streets.—The Markets.—The Pasao.—Fair Donnas.—Botanical Garden.—Cigar making.—A Havannah Tavern.—Spanish Cookery.—Battle at a Boarding-house.—Nic, the Tavern-keeper and Undertaker.—A Death-bed Scene.—The Blanche sails.—Visit the Churches.—High Mass.—Lively Music.—The Priests.—The Bishop of Havannah.—Clerical Gambling and Immorality.—Decay of Religion.—The University of St. Jerome.—The Casa de Beneficencia.—The Institution of St. Lazarus.—The Casa de Locos.—The Campo Santo.—A crowded Cemetery.—The Bishop lauded.—Funeral Rites.—Barbarous Customs.—The Havannah, a hot-bed of Disease.—A Deadly Swamp.—Mortality in a British Frigate.—Manner in which the Havanneros spend their time.—The Ball-room.—The Carcal, or Prison.—Cut-throat Characters.—Shocking Depravity.—Havannah and Hydrabad compared.—Day Robberies.—The Man with the Iron Cane.—The murdered Galician.—An execution.

HAVANNAH and its suburbs are said now to contain nearly two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, and, as in all fortified cities, this great population occupies little room within the walls, but a great many new houses are in progress without. I walked to one of the plazas, or squares, where the markets are held, to observe how the inhabitants were fed. Numerous volantes drove me to the wall with the cry of the postilion, “Cuidao cavalleros!” (“Take care, gentlemen!”) addressed

either to the whites or blacks ; or large carts, called carots, drawn by bullocks, yoked by the horns, which blocked up the way. Groups of slaves wandered about, the men in broad-brimmed straw or leaf hats, the women carrying fruit and vegetables on their heads, and both sexes smoking with great zest. The dons, in their striped chupas and gold-headed canes, walked consequentially along ; and the ladies in their black mantillas, walked or rode to their devotions, preceded by a female slave, carrying a cushion, or mat, and prayer-book. A stout, well-fed priest, would brush past in his large black hat and ample canonicals. The soldiers marched to relieve guard in a slovenly manner, accompanied by officers, whose epaulettes rested on their breast.

I found in the great market-square a considerable number of monteros, or country people, white, brown, and black. They were mostly sitting on gallows, whose tails were tied in a club ; and wore straw-hats, a shirt and trowsers, with a long machette, or sword, in their girdle. The poor horses bore, besides their riders, bundles of molaxca, or the stalks of green maize, used as fodder ; and poultry, fruit, and vegetables, also hung round the unfortunate beasts. The provision-stalls were well supplied with meat and fish ; the former about a shilling the pound, and great quantities are consumed in the Havannah ; those who can afford it, eat it three times a day. Then I walked past

stalls, on which handsome cutlery and jewellery were displayed ; conspicuous among which, in coarse leather sheaths, were English black-handled carving knives, the back and edge brought to a point. No explanation was required as to the use of this weapon.

In the evening I walked to the Pasao or Hyde Park of Havannah, with Captain Burnett, of the *Blanche*, and Mr. Jackson. At the distance of half a mile from the walls of the city we found a broad road with side-walks and rows of trees. Marble fountains diffused a pleasing coolness, and seats at intervals were occupied by well-dressed men. The ladies were seated in their volantes, which were highly ornamented with silver, and the calasero, or postilion, in a richly laced hussar jacket. The volantes followed one another at a slow pace ; the envious *capacité*, or blue cloth, was removed from the front of the volante, and the fair Cubanñas sat revealed in all their charms to the admiring gaze of the loungers.

The donnas were all clothed in virgin white, wore no head-dress, except beautifully carved and very large tortoise-shell combs, the fashion of which alters every month, entailing a heavy expense on husbands and fathers. Their hair was “ dark as the curtain of night overshadowing the burning heart of a lover,” and the cool breeze of evening wantoned with their tresses ; their complexions were like Parian marble, and as they passed an

acquaintance, their fine eyes beamed forth pleasure, and with a lively shake of the fan they lisped, a dios ! a dios !

It was a lively and a most interesting exhibition ; a band of music breathed dulcet sounds, the air was perfumed with aromatic gales, and the eye gladdened with the sight of the beautiful and elegantly attired daughters of Cuba enjoying the balmy influence of a tropical sunset—

“ While deeper blushes tinged the glowing sky,
And evening raised her silver lamp on high.”

Adjoining the Pasao was the botanical garden, which was kept in the highest order, and boasted many rare plants. After walking round it we returned to the city, with the greater number of the officers of the *Blanche*, who were anxious to lay in a supply of real havannahs. In the cigar-shops we saw the negroes cutting and rolling up the fragrant leaves, and neatly twisting the ends with the assistance of a little water.

The king's cigars sell for twenty dollars a thousand ; but these, like real Tokay, are very difficult to be procured. Excellent cigars may be purchased for twelve dollars ; and the Havannahs which are sold in England for ten pounds, are to be purchased here for ten dollars a thousand.

I was anxious to see the manner of living at the Havannah taverns, or boarding-houses, and accordingly dined at one. The charge for dinner was one dollar, for which abundant fare was provided, inclusive of French claret. Soup, solids,

and dessert, were placed on the table at once ; the dishes were crowded on one another, and on the ringing of the bell the company hastily took their seats, and made a vigorous onslaught ; every one plunged his fork into the dish he liked best, and there was such a scramble, such a clatter of knives and plates, that it reminded me of Dugald Dalgetty laying in his provent for three days.

Such a quantity of oil and grease, to say nothing of garlic, is used in Spanish cookery, that I really could not “ play the knife and fork ” that my appetite prompted me to do, but contrived to allay the cravings of hunger with coffee and bread at the end of the feast.

The company consisted of Spaniards, Germans, Frenchmen, Russians, and English, captains of ships ; it was a strange medley both as to language and manners. Most of the guests had the air of desperadoes and adventurers, and they seemed very indifferent to common courtesy in their behaviour to each other ; thus at these houses it is no uncommon thing to see joints of meat and glasses flying across the table, and violent quarrels ending in blows. Sometimes they commence in this way ; a skipper asks for an omelet opposite to him ; a negro runs round to fetch it ; in conveying it to the sailor he is stopped half way by another gentleman, who coolly seizes the dish, cuts the omelet in two, takes half himself, and gives the other half to a friend next him ; the disappointed skipper vents his rage by uttering a hearty curse, and sends his

glass at the head of the gentleman who had taken "the bread out of his mouth."

One of the most remarkable characters in Havannah, was Nic, the keeper of a boarding-house frequented principally by English and American captains and supercargoes. He was a Yorkshireman of low extraction, vulgar in his appearance and language, shrewd and mercenary in his character; in height he was about five feet six, with long yellow hair and freckled face, and had a short arm, which rather assisted him than otherwise in carving. He took the lead in the conversation at table, flatly contradicting those who differed in opinion with him, and, above all, was fond of joking about yellow fever, the head-quarters of which, in the West Indies, may be said to be Havannah. Nic was an undertaker as well as a tavern-keeper, and had a loft, or larder, as he called it, of ready-made coffins of all sizes, with which he could accommodate his guests at the shortest notice, and he had also a private burial-ground. "Take care of Nic's stick," became a current saying in Havannah, for when a stranger arrived Nic would talk to him, and all the while be measuring him with a short stick, in case a coffin was required.

An acquaintance told me that he lived for some time at Nic's house, and there got acquainted with a very pleasant young man, an English supercargo, who was full of health and spirits, and fondly anticipated the successful result of a mercantile speculation. One day my acquaintance missed

him, and he asked Nic what had become of him. "He is in the next room," said Nic coolly; "we'll go in and see him after dinner." When the coffee had been discussed and the cigars lighted, Nic asked the company to follow him; they did so, and found the supercargo a yellow corpse in his bedroom, and laid out for interment; he had just succumbed to the demon of the West. My acquaintance was shocked beyond measure at such a sudden and awful event, for he really had a regard for the young man. Nic made a joke of the matter, and rubbing his hands, jeeringly said, "Well who's for a rubber at whist?"

The Blanche sailed for Quebec, Admiral Saborde in the kindest manner sending his boats to tow her out of the harbour. I was so much interested where I was, that I determined to spend two or three weeks in Cuba. I took great delight in visiting the churches, which are open during the day; and though high mass is commonly performed in the morning only, yet at all hours a few worshippers might be seen kneeling on the cold pavement before a favourite saint, crossing themselves, muttering their prayers, beating their breasts, and prostrating themselves in the dust.

"True piety is cheerful as the day;
Will weep, indeed, and heave a pitying groan
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own."

The altars glittered with gold and silver, and the images of the Madonna in particular (some of which were jet black) blazed in silks and jewels,

whilst the effigy of "the Man of Sorrows" seemed to be neglected. The church of St. Domingo is a noble pile, and is filled with rich presents; the sacred vessels of a massive size, and the paintings in costly frames and cases: "ajub jae burae chuppao,"—a glorious place for a foray! as a Khorasanee would say if he saw it. Yet St. Francisco is more imposing, from its gothic architecture and great dimensions; through its long-drawn ailes the organ peals most sublimely, and for a while entrances the soul.

Some think that the masses in the Havannah were excellently performed, but I cannot say I am of that opinion; for instance, in repairing to a church in the morning, the señoras, in their black dresses and mantillas, would come in and seat themselves on the floor on a mat, whilst their black slaves would kneel behind them, and a few men, either old Spaniards or brown monteros, would stand beside the pillars. A priest in flowing robes, and preceded by two attendants bearing candles, would then advance to the altar, burn incense, and commence a chant, which was answered from the gallery in such a lively strain that one was more reminded of a concert-room than of the house of prayer. He would then hurry through the service in Latin, but so fast and so indistinctly that it was a perfect mockery, even if his auditors had understood the language, which they did not, though I believe some of the most devout of the female worshippers had a translation to assist them. During

the pauses in the service I remarked smiles and conversation behind the fans, and I invariably retired from the scene, sincerely pitying those who, content with the mere ceremonials of religion, are not aware that these are altogether insignificant compared with its precepts.

The priests in the Havannah exceed four hundred in number, and appear to enjoy the good things of this life as well as their brethren elsewhere, for they generally look sleek and fat. Some of the elders, I remarked, were dignified in their appearance, but the greater number had a very sensual and un-intellectual air about them. The Bishop of Havannah is a very superior personage, and expends his income of one hundred and ten thousand dollars in acts of charity, in beautifying the city, and repairing churches; his good deeds will embalm his memory, and, like the rose, he will leave a sweet savour even after his demise. But it would be well for the island, of which he is the brightest ornament, if, as the Spaniards say, he “would live a thousand years.”

Some of the country priests employ their time honourably in instructing the youth of their parishes, and as the excellent American (Dr. Abbot) said, if the priests of each parish would do the same, what reproachful examples of idleness, gambling, and cock-fighting would at once disappear, and the moral desert blossom luxuriantly; then an enlightened population would inhabit the rich valleys of Cuba, peace and prosperity would attend them,

the lawless bands of ruffians who occupy the Sierras would be suppressed, and then there might be some hopes of free labour superseding that of slavery.

Many of the country padres are excessively idle and openly vicious, and a perfect disgrace to the church. I heard a liberal ecclesiastic lament over the sins of his brethren, and regret that marriage was not permitted in the church. Many of the padres have a handsome niece to keep their house in order, but it is better this than exciting the jealousy of husbands. One of these gallant priests, some time ago, had justly excited the indignation of a Spaniard by attentions in a quarter where he had no business ; and as the priest alighted from his volante at a ball-room, he received a foot of steel between his ribs and perished on the spot.

Though the moral character of the bulk of the people is not high, yet they are fully aware what the clerical office ought to be, and that the hands of those who elevate the host and impart the sacred wafer should be unspotted and pure as ermine. What respect can a clergy be held in when they are too often bold and eager gamblers ? From mass they go to the cock-pit, and from the cock-pit to mass, and sometimes delay the mass to see the end of a fight. They might be seen at Guanabacoa, in full canonicals, watching with intense interest a combat between a favourite cock and that of a negro slave, who had staked his money against that of the unworthy priest.

Of late years there has been a great decay of

religion in Cuba. The writings of Voltaire and Rousseau have corrupted the people, made them indifferent to the Catholic religion, and given them no substitute. After the negro insurrection in St. Domingo, and the expulsion of the French from the island, they flocked to Cuba, sneered at the mental slavery of the Spaniards, as they termed it, and scoffed at religion in every shape. The young Dons became infected with the free-thinking of their visitors, and affected to despise the religion of their fathers.

A convent of preaching friars established the University of St. Jerome, the principal of which, Don Hugo Valles, is a most intelligent and upright ecclesiastic, but with all his influence he cannot persuade any of the youths who attend the university to remain after the age of sixteen; they are quite content after they can read and write Spanish, and then put on the *togam virilem*, sport a gold-headed cane, and give themselves up to pleasure.

One evening I walked out with Mr. Jackson to visit some of the public institutions which have lately sprung up, much to the credit of the Havaneros. The first we reached, outside the walls, and near the sea, was the Casa de Beneficencia, or House of Mercy, for the education of orphans and friendless children of both sexes. The buildings are very extensive, and enclosed a court through which a stream of pure water runs. The apartments are large, and well aired; and it was extremely interesting to see the girls, in particular,

sitting at the grated windows reading, or engaged with their needlework. The boys are taught after the Lancasterian plan. Every attention is paid to health and cleanliness in this noble institution, which rears three hundred of both sexes, and afterwards establishes them in the world. If the females are married from the Casa de Beneficencia, they receive a dower of five hundred dollars; and the boys have a sum advanced to them with which to begin business.

We next turned to the institution of St. Lazarus, or the lazaretto for lepers. The gate was open, and instead of the infected being shut up, I saw several of them sitting by the road side wearing an air of hopeless dejection. They were principally negroes whom I saw, many of them frightfully disfigured, and beginning to lose their lips; others were affected in their extremities.

“ The blood beat not, as wont, within their veins;
Dimness crept o’er their eyes; a drowsy sloth
Fetter’d their limbs, like palsy.”

Round the court were apartments occupied by white lepers, men and women: they looked extremely dejected, for their disease is incurable; though some live forty years before they finally sink into the grave, a mass of corruption too horrible to describe. It was with painful interest that the sounds of the guitar, accompanied with a feeble voice, were heard from the cell of one of the inmates, who tried to beguile his sorrows with the soothing notes of melancholy music.

The next public building we came to was the Insane Hospital (Casa de Locos) inclosed with a lofty wall, and with a handsome entrance, over which was painted a fool's cap and bells. We passed into a spacious court, and saw some noble figures of men, with the wandering eye of lunacy, lounging about. We then passed an inner gate, and found ourselves in a beautiful garden full of shrubs and flowering plants: here and there were secluded walks and arbours for the inoffensive insane. On passing a cell with a grated opening in the door, a voice from within beseechingly implored for a cigar. A strange figure, wearing a high cap decorated with blue and red flags, then crossed our path; and a fine-looking fellow came up to me eagerly, and asked me if I was a naval officer, and talked of ships and of the sea, on which he had once been a rover.

The Campo Santo was our next halting-place. This is the only burial-place for Catholics in Havannah, and is a square enclosure of two or three acres, surrounded with a wall painted in panels, and at the corners are pyramidal shafts twelve or fifteen feet high. The entrance is very appropriate to this field of the dead: on it are painted emblems of death, female figures with reversed torches in their hands, and bearing also the Cross and Bible. We entered the burial-ground, and walked up the central path on a pavement of flags, and saw on either hand the rank grass reaching higher than the walls, and the earth

heaving up over the crowded dead. At the further end of the path was a beautiful chapel, in which, besides the funeral rites performed at the entrance, others are performed for those who can afford to pay for them, and then they are buried near it. On the stones we read the names of the most distinguished in the island—governor, nobles, and the wealthy; whilst the poorer classes are laid in trenches near the entrance to the Campo Santo, and have quick lime thrown over them.

On the front of the chapel was this inscription:—

“ Ecce nunc in pulvere dormiam,
Et ego resuscitabo eum in novissimo die.”

And on the interior wall was a well-executed painting. A patriarch, surrounded by his weeping family, seems to be resigning himself to death; and above him is an angel sounding the last trumpet, and a holy family mounting with joy and gladness to the regions of bliss.

Though the Campo Santo is much too small for such a population as the Havannah, yet it is a great improvement on the old system of burying the dead in the churches, and pounding them under the floor with a heavy stone pestle, so as to make them occupy as little room as possible. What can be conceived more barbarous than this?—yet it is still practised on the South American continent. It is to the enlightened bishop that this great public improvement is owing; and though he had strong prejudices on the part of the Havanners to over-

come, yet he refused to grant Christian burial to any one in the church after the Campo Santo was prepared, and has thus materially improved the health of the city by the beneficent change he has so judiciously and so resolutely introduced.

When a respectable person dies in the Havannah, a lofty stage is erected in the principal apartment, covered with black drapery and tinsel ornaments, and on the top of it the open coffin is placed at an angle so as to expose the dead body, dressed in holiday clothes, to the spectators below. There is also a great display of wax lights in the room. The volantes of the friends of the deceased being assembled, the bier is placed across the leading one, which, with the calassero and horse, is covered with black cloth, and attended by slaves in long red coats, gold-laced cocked hats, and canes in their hands. The procession moves to the Campo Santo. Arrived there, the coffin is taken from the volante, the head of the corpse being uncovered, and kept in constant motion by the hasty step of the bearers. It is a ghastly sight. After the service is performed, the body is commonly tumbled unceremoniously into the shallow grave, lime and earth thrown over it, whilst the coffin is retained for the next who requires it. When children are buried, the attendants sing and play lively airs before them, as Heaven is doubtless their portion. Truly, a funeral at the Havannah is conducted in a manner that the most uncivilized nation might be ashamed of: but such has been the custom from

time immemorial, and it seems we must always bow to the wisdom of our ancestors.

The Havannah is the hot-bed of disease, and one cannot long be an inhabitant of it without having the fatal effects of the yellow-fever continually brought before his eyes. In the room under mine, an unfortunate Spaniard sickened and died of this deadly pest, on which I took a dose of quinine, the only medicine I carried with me. It is very easy to see the cause of yellow-fever at the Havannah, and one is struck with wonder at the apathy and indifference of the authorities, who might so easily, at little expense, render the city really as healthy as any between the tropics. Opposite the town, extending from the side of the harbour into the country to the east, is a long marsh of mangroves. Now, by a simple dam thrown across this, the salt-water of the bay might be easily excluded, the marsh would dry up, and its deadly miasma would disappear. The streets are narrow and abominably dirty; under one of them only is a common sewer, and the rain washes away the mud and filth of the others as it best can. Often whole ships' crews die in a few days, and on an average twenty-five Catholics are buried in the Campo Santo daily, whilst the heretics are conveyed to a burial-ground of their own. Though the wealthy, in the lofty and airy apartments in their upper stories, are more exempt than those who dwell in the lowly sheds, from yellow-fever, yet they should give a thought to their poorer countrymen, and try to

remove the disease from their dwellings, and from the unfortunate seamen in the bay.

His Britannic Majesty's frigate *Aurora* arrived sometime ago at Havannah, after having been three years in the West Indies; she dropped her anchor at a spot where the breeze blowing over the mangrove swamp could reach her. The *Pylades*, a fresh arrival from England, also anchored for one night in the harbour, but at the distance of a few hundred yards from the *Aurora*; next morning the two vessels sailed, the *Aurora* lost eighty men and officers in a few weeks from yellow-fever, and the *Pylades*, though unaccustomed to the climate, did not lose one hand.

The manner in which the rich Havanneros spend their time is shortly this:—They rise early, take a cup of chocolate, the men light their cigars and stroll about the balconies till ten o'clock, the ladies generally attend mass; then a breakfast of meat and fish, eggs and ham, wine and coffee is brought in; after these are discussed, the cigars are again lighted at a little pan of charcoal placed on the middle of the table, the elderly ladies using the cigaritto, or little cigar wrapped in paper. The men then order the *volante*, or walk out, and the women either pay a visit of ceremony, or sit at home to receive one in their rocking-chairs. At three o'clock dinner is brought in, and the meal of rich made-dishes lasts an hour; the charcoal pan again appears, coffee is handed round, and all retire to take their *siesta*. In an hour the *Pasao* is

visited, where is also the amphitheatre for the *corridas de toros* (bull-fights), and when these take place, the attraction is so great, that it is extremely difficult to procure admission. From the Pasao the theatre may be visited, a large heavy pile with a bomb-proof roof. The performances here are respectable, and the dialogues in the Spanish plays spirited. Yet the boards here are disgraced, as in London, with pantomimic representations, and puppets, like those which Don Quixote played such havoc with.

I attended several public balls given by gamblers in Havannah; the company, consisting of Señoras in white robes, and Dons in striped gingham coats, arrived in their volantes with flambeaux carried before them. In an outer saloon were card-tables at which the Monté players were seated, with piles of gold ounces, and silver dollars before them. Ladies and gentlemen stood round the players, and anxiously watched the turning up of the cards, and many staked heavy sums. I observed some of those characters that are everywhere to be met with in Havannah, also deeply interested in the result of the game, athletic sun-burnt and black-whiskered men, with the determined eye of the sea rover, and ever and anon glancing round the group with a fiendish expression if they lost.

The ball-room was always brilliantly lighted up, the ladies sitting in rows round it as usual, and the men in groups, or lounging about in the galleries smoking; when the dancing commenced, the

band, consisting of nine performers, three violins, two violoncellos, hautboys and French horns, would play in a most animating and excellent style, a waltz, fandango, or contredanza, the latter a combination of the waltz and quadrille; and certainly, for grace and elegance in the dance, the Havanneros are unrivalled. I was at first diffident in joining such excellent votaries of Terpsichore, but found that, unless I did so, the fair Cubannas would think me stiff and precise, for in their intercourse with one another they are devoid of the absurd formality of the old school of good-breeding; so I plucked up courage and led out a Señoritta with black hair and sparkling eyes, but without gloves, which are not worn in Cuba by ladies or gentlemen. At supper, as a mark of attention to the stranger, she with some of her companions, came with a plate of dolces, or sweetmeats, some of which she presented to me with her fair hand, reminding me of the Persian custom of stuffing the mouths of poets with sugar-candy.

At a country ball, where all the company were on terms of intimacy, I was much amused with the game of blind-man's-buff introduced as a dance. Ladies and gentlemen circled in a ring round the blind-folded Don in the centre, who had a cane in his hand, with which he pointed at any of the company; the music would then stop, and the person indicated would take the end of the stick, and in a disguised and squeaking tone repeat some trifling sentence; if the blind-folded guessed the name of

the speaker, he was allowed to take off the handkerchief, if not, the music and dancing recommenced. Sometimes, all the dancers would slip off to their seats, and leave the blind-folded in a ridiculous situation in the middle of the room, trying to feel with his cane the company who had retired, and who were convulsed with suppressed laughter.

“ Ah ! crop the flowers of pleasure when they blow,
Ere winter hides them in a vale of snow.”

Turn we now from the ball-room to another scene, and venture to penetrate and explore the gloomy saloons of the most horrid receptacle of crime in the civilized world, the Carcal, or prison of “ the cultivated city of Havannah,” as the Spaniards delight to call it. I visited this dreadful place, and though it is almost impossible to obtain circumstantial details regarding it, owing to the extreme jealousy of the Spaniards, and their unwillingness to expose the great want of order, and entire absence of decency which prevail within its detested walls, yet I am enabled from personal observation and hearsay to lay before my readers a sketch of the Carcal as it now exists.

The entrance to it is on the southern side of the governor's house, and the gratings of the back cells open into the very patio, or court-yard of the palace. The gaol itself contains a long paved court, in looking into which through a grated door, where was a strong guard of soldiers, I saw some of the most cut-throat looking characters I ever beheld. They were of all classes and colours, black, yellow,

and white, and many had gambled away all their clothes, save a thin pair of drawers. From the murderer to the petty thief, all were allowed to mingle indiscriminately. Not the least classification was attempted. At night the prisoners are disposed of under the piazzas which surround the court, and sleep on plank couches, retiring to rest at nine o'clock. Up stairs is a large sala, or strong room, (having no connexion with the yard,) also for male prisoners of all kinds. On the left-hand side of the entrance on the first floor, I observed a separate apartment for women, and opposite to it is the "Sala de distincion," or state-room for chance customers, such as drunkards, and other disorderly persons, arrested after improper hours in the streets, and who can afford to pay for superior accommodation. Mutinous sailors, run-away negroes, and others, whose offences are light as well as their pockets, are thrust into the court-yard with the *canaille*, and have to fight out accommodation for themselves. I was told by some American sailors, who had been incarcerated by their captain for asking higher wages, that they witnessed such scenes of vice and depravity every night, that they were obliged to keep regular watch on one another.

All the prisoners are allowed to exercise, within the prison, any trade or handicraft they may have followed, barring that one which procured them a lodging in the Government-house, although they sometimes find opportunity to practise even that also. The produce of their honest industry, such

as plaiting straw-hats, huckstering fruit, &c. is applied partly to defray the expenses of the prison establishment ; and the residue is given up to their entire disposal. Even the assassins enjoy this privilege until sentence of death is pronounced upon them, when they are removed to separate cells up stairs.

Murders are often committed in the Carcal in the following manner : Three men gamble in the daytime, and one of them wins the money of the other two. The losers then conspire together to murder and rob the winner ; at night they watch where he lies down to sleep in one of the saloons, and each goes to the lamps at the ends of the sala ; they extinguish them simultaneously, draw their knives, and make a rush at the place where their victim lies ; they stab him in the dark, and sometimes one or two others on each side of him to make sure of him ; then strip the body or bodies of their money, and thrust them down the sink.

The prison is a rich Golconda for the Havannah lawyers. Persons accused on the slightest grounds of any offence or crime are incarcerated without examination, being afterwards permitted to exonerate themselves through the agency of these pests of the island society, who never fail to extort the utmost fee from their unfortunate clients. Persons of the better classes and state prisoners are generally confined in one or other of the forts, and some of them are allowed the liberty of their limits. When the common gaol is overstocked, as often

happens, the surplus is transferred to the cells of Fort Cabanas.

In a city, the population of which is so mixed, the habits of the lower classes so demoralised, among whom gambling and its concomitant, drunkenness, is so prevalent,—in a city where there is no police, and where, by paying the priests handsomely, absolution may be obtained for the most atrocious crimes, no wonder that robberies and assassinations are of almost daily occurrence. Some time ago no fewer than seven white people were murdered in different parts of the city in one day. I remember when on one occasion I visited Hyderabad, a den of miscreants in the East Indies, in the guise of a Mussulman, (for none in European costume could enter its walls with safety,) three were murdered there that day in the streets; but that was nothing to Havannah.

In this latter city people are robbed in open day in the following manner: Two villains come on each side of a pedestrian, displaying long knives under their arms; while a third deliberately takes out his watch, purse, gold shirt buttons, &c. and whispers that if the least noise is made, the knife will do its office; and though the plundered individual may afterwards recognise the robbers, he is afraid to give evidence against them, and must just put up with his loss.

Rather a laughable robbery took place about the time when I was in Havannah. One evening a lover was doing the agreeable to his mistress

through a grated window on a level with the street ; three men passing observed that he was gaily dressed, in order to appear to advantage in the eyes of the fair ; one tapped him on the shoulder, and said, " You are wanted." He stepped aside. The other two showed him their knives. He was stripped of his finery on the spot, and then sneaked back to the window for condolence.

When the least scuffle takes place in the streets, all the doors and windows are hastily closed in the neighbourhood ; the inmates of the houses are so much afraid of being called upon to give evidence in case of a murder. I walked about at all hours, and fortunately escaped molestation ; but I was fully prepared for a skirmish, with an iron-cane, a very handy weapon, something between a poker and a crow-bar. On looking at it, no one could suspect its weight until they felt it. I recommend this to travellers instead of the piked sticks of Dr. Kitchener, for it strengthens the chest and arms, and disables an antagonist without killing him.

The bodies of the murdered are exposed for a day in the street, behind the gaol, in order that their relatives may claim them. One forenoon, I happened to be passing the government-house with my friend Mr. Jackson, and observed a small crowd collected ; we looked over the shoulders of the people, and saw a ghastly sight. In an open bier, with legs and handles to it, lay the corpse of a white man, about forty years of age, rather good-looking, and wearing a grim smile on his counte-

nance. A dreadful gash was in his throat, his hands were also cut in the death-struggle, and his trowsers and shirt were torn, and literally steeped in gore. This was a Gallician shopkeeper, who had been murdered in his own store, two or three hours before. He was a sober and industrious man, had arrived in Havannah a few years before, and had become possessed of twenty houses, and eighty thousand dollars in cash. His negro wench informed two of her black paramours where the money was kept. The miscreants went in the morning, on pretence of purchasing rope; the Gallician stepped to a corner of the store to supply them; they sprang upon him like wolves, held his mouth, threw him down, cut his throat, and carried off two coffee-bags of gold. All this took place within a few yards of the custom-house guard, with perfect impunity to the murderers.

One day I was returning from the country in a volante, with a gentleman, (who had resided some years in Havannah, and was one of the few English merchants of respectability there,) when he told me the following story: "This hollow way, which we are now passing," said he, "leading down to the shallow stream at the bottom, has been the scene of more deeds of violence than perhaps any other in the island of Cuba. One evening I was riding a spirited horse, and on coming to this spot, a man dashed at me from the side of the road, and attempted to seize my bridle. I galloped over him, and he called out, and another

grasped my thigh and nearly pulled me off; I struck him on the face, freed myself, and put spurs to my charger; a blunderbuss was fired after me, I escaped; my horse was wounded in the neck, but carried me into town. On another occasion, I saw three men on the road before me; it was open day; they were a white man and two mulattoes; they walked with their hands in their breasts. I suspected that they grasped their weapons; accordingly, I attempted to make a wide circuit round them, but got involved in a morass; seeing that I must pass them, I primed my pistols, took one in each hand, and with my reins in my mouth, passed the fellows, and muttered "Adios," their answer was, "Carajo, Inglese." Some of these villains laid a plot to seize my favourite horse, for whilst on it I set them all at defiance. I found out by accident their contrivance. A negro stopped me one day on the Pasao, and said, 'Signor, you were kind to me when I was sick, and I'll now tell you a secret. I overheard some monteros talking about seizing your horse; be on your guard.' I gave him a dollar, and promised him more if he spoke the truth. Shortly after I saw five countrymen waiting for me on the road, 'Hist! hist!' said they, in the usual Spanish way, 'we have something to say to you.'—'To my horse, I suppose,' answered I, and galloped on. Not long ago, I got a clerk from Yorkshire; he was a raw country lad, and went out to take a walk, the evening of the day after his arrival. Whilst gaping and staring

about the streets, he was followed by a robber, who got him into a corner, and struggled with him to get his watch. The robber succeeded and ran off. My clerk came home much agitated and went to bed; on going in to see him in the morning, I found the bed-clothes bloody; I awoke the sleeper, to ask him what was the matter, and to his horror and alarm he discovered that he had been stabbed within a quarter of an inch of his heart. He recovered in three or four days, but has never ventured since to take constitutional exercise of an evening."

I have described some deeds of violence, but I have not yet brought any culprit to condign punishment. I am tired of horrors, and am afraid my readers are so likewise; but I think it will be satisfactory to describe an execution, which does not happen quite so often as it ought to do at Havannah. If a criminal has money, he may put off capital punishment for years, even after sentence is passed upon him; but he who is friendless and pennyless, mounts the scaffold immediately after he has been found guilty of a capital offence. The Spaniards have a great objection to see a white person executed at Havannah, because it degrades their order in the eyes of the coloured inhabitants. They bribe the civil authorities and priests to procure respites, and even if the culprit is not entitled to the least mercy, they will go to the governor and solicit a pardon by the *impegnio*, or private petition, which it is not generally the custom to refuse.

A white woman had made mince-meat of her husband, and had put the mangled body into a beef-barrel ; she was found guilty, but by means of bribery and the *impegnio*, the punishment was delayed for two years ; at last, to the great annoyance of the fair Havanneras, she was placed on the fatal *garoté*, and her hands and feet tied to the chair, a collar of iron received her neck, to which a screw and winch were attached. A priest prayed with the condemned, and on a signal the executioner stepped behind the culprit, turned the winch, the neck was dislocated in a moment, and “ the bitter sherbet of death tasted.”

On passing the Carcal one afternoon, I saw a cross and lanterns displayed before a black cloth opposite the door of the prison chapel ; this was the signal for the execution of a criminal on the morrow. In the chapel was a tall negro, pinioned and guarded, with a priest sitting beside him ; I asked what the crime was for which he was about to suffer, and was told that he had been attached to a negress, but discovering that she favoured a mulatto, he waylaid them whilst they were proceeding on horseback into the country, and murdered man, woman, and horse, in a solitary place.

I rose at five o'clock next morning to witness a Spanish execution. The condemned, dressed in a white frock, was taken from the chapel, and drawn in a hurdle for some distance, and then compelled to walk for a mile and a half to the plain without the city, which is washed on two sides by the sea ;

here was the gallows. The cross and lanterns preceded the coffin. He was attended by the Brothers of Charity in black robes and white capes, one of them bearing a bottle of brandy and a glass ; the " *Companios Urbanos*," or city guard, in leather caps, green jackets, carbines, and swords, were on each side. Arrived at the fatal tree, where a multitude waited in anxious expectation of the sight, the culprit got a large dose from the bottle, and then, with a ferocious-looking negro (the executioner), mounted the double ladder, and the rope was adjusted ; the executioner then whispered something in the ear of the culprit, probably to throw himself off, but he did not do so, when the executioner gave him a hitch with his elbow, and away he swung ; the executioner then sprang into the air with the agility of a *Clias*, seized the rope, and alighted on the shoulders of the murderer, and there sat kicking his breast with his heels. When the executioner had satisfied himself, by stooping down and looking in the face of the culprit, that it was all over with him, he slid down by the legs and mingled with the crowd. Then a priest mounted the ladder, and pointing to the dead, delivered a short and impressive homily. The body was left on the gallows till mid-day, and then taken down for the purpose of being decapitated, and the head to be placed on a pole at the spot where the foul deed had been done.

CHAPTER XXII.

Statistical account of Cuba.—Census of Cuba.—Difficulty of ascertaining the amount of Negro population.—Sugar and Coffee estates.—Cuba, how divided.—Effects of circular surveying.—List of Vessels at Havannah.—Commerce.—The Revenue of Cuba.—The Tonnage.—Foreign Merchants in Havannah.—The Natural History of Cuba.—Piratical haunts.—Pleasures of the Asatea.—Cubanos mind their own affairs.—Jealousy of the Spanish Military.—View the defences of the Moro and Cabanas.—Silver Walls.—Offer of protection to the Cubanos.—Heavy duty on flour.—Strange conduct of Spanish Officers.—Spanish Troops.—A Sugar Colonel.—Excursion into the interior.—The Monteros.—Caravans.—The Great Red Plain.—Treatment of the Aborigines by their Conquerors.—Treatment of Negro Slaves.—The Slave Trade.—Canarymen.—A Cuban Overseer.—Slave Labour.—Food of Slaves.—Dress.—Punishments.—Capture of Slaves.—Plans for suppressing the Slave Trade.—Negro Music.—Characters of different Classes in Cuba.—The Count Fernandino.—An Entertainment.—Daquilla.—A Chase.—Yellow Fever.—A Hurricane.—Sail from Havannah.

UNTIL lately it has been the policy of Spain to conceal, with a veil of impenetrable mystery, the internal condition and resources of her colonies; but as regards Cuba, this veil has lately been unexpectedly withdrawn, under the direction of the captain-general. A statistical account of “the ever faithful island of Cuba,” was prepared by a committee of military and civil officers, and publish-

ed at the Havannah in 1829. This is to be followed by another similar publication next year, from which very ample information is expected on this noble colony.

The last census of the population in 1829, gives a return of 704,867 inhabitants, over a most fertile surface as large as Portugal, and equal to all the Antilles put together. At this moment the population is roughly estimated at 1,020,000; but taking it at a million, 500,000 of these are free, and 500,000 are slaves; of the free 300,000 are white, 125,470 are mulattoes, and 74,530 are negroes; of the slave population about 50,000 are mulattoes. According to the tables of Dr. Abbott, with regard to the slave population, it is nearly impossible to get at any thing like the truth. Fresh importations are constantly arriving from Africa, some estimate them at 10 or 15,000 last year; 2000 fresh landed from Africa, passed under my window one morning from the country; and the mortality of these unfortunate beings is dreadful, from 10 to 15 per cent. It is the interest of the planters to conceal the number of their slaves, to save the capitation tax; and it is the policy of the government to conceal from the negroes their own strength, and also that of the military on the island, which may be reckoned at 20,000 men.

The number of slaves introduced into the island has always been very great, thus—

From 1521 to 1763	.	60,000
1764 to 1790		33,490

In Havannah alone—

From 1791 to 1805	.	91,211
1806 to 1820	.	131,892

There were, besides these, fifty-six thousand introduced into the eastern parts of the island clandestinely, from 1791 to 1820. Most of the coloured population are born out of marriage; in 1828 one marriage only took place out of one hundred and ninety-four individuals of the entire population.

The monteros, or lower class of whites, cultivate small farms all over the country, principally by means of a rude plough with one shaft, to which horses or bullocks are attached. Besides these farms, of which no return of the number could be procured, there are now about one thousand two hundred sugar plantations, and two thousand two hundred coffee estates.

The island is divided into three provinces—Havannah, Cuba, and Puerto Principe, over each of which is a governor, though the Captain-General and Governor of Havannah is superior to the other two. Each province is divided into partidos, or portions, each about one and a half or two leagues square; these are altogether one hundred and twenty in number, but the uninhabited parts of the island have not yet been portioned off. The parroquias, or parishes, are subdivisions of the partidos. Towns of one thousand inhabitants have corporations, but they are subject to the Captain de Partido, who again reports to the Governor of his province.

The inhabited parts of the island were surveyed in circles touching each other, consequently between these there were portions unappropriated. The Louisiana and Florida Americans, with their long noses, quickly smelt out these "locations," and came over to the ever-faithful island and "squatted" upon them, without leave asked or obtained. I heard many complaints of these intruders, and the Spanish proprietors threatened that if they did not leave the country, or purchase property in the usual way, club law would be put in force.

List of vessels which left the Havannah in
October 1831 :—

	Vessels of war.	Merchantmen.
Spanish vessels	3	42
American	1	27
English	5	3
Hamburgher	0	1
Prussian	0	1
Sardinian	0	1

Total departures, 84.

The arrivals were 75.

Average importation of Cuba, 1831 :—

Spanish Trade	.	3,924,847	Dollars.
Foreign Trade	.	11,487,842	
In-bound	.	1,923,501	
Total		17,336,190	

Average exportation, 1831 :—

Spanish Trade	.	2,373,298	Dollars.
Foreign Trade	.	10,344,631	
In-bound	.	1,488,823	
Total		14,206,752	

The revenue of Cuba amounted, in 1831, to nine millions of dollars ; and the tonnage to the grand total of two hundred and forty-seven thousand fifty-seven tons and a half this year, and last year to two hundred and forty-nine thousand two hundred and fifty-three tons, for Java coffee and Brazilian sugar have interfered with Cuba produce so as to reduce the demand for it in foreign markets. The amount of specie which left Havannah for foreign countries, in 1831, amounted to nine hundred and eighteen thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine dollars and three-quarters ; which summary, I think, will convey some idea of the great prosperity of this bright jewel in the Spanish diadem.

There are only three English merchants of respectability in Havannah, but the Americans are in considerable numbers there. I am sorry to say, however, that many of them are very unprincipled. New Orleans is first resorted to by the worthless, and as a last resource they come to the Havannah. The Spanish merchants stand in great fear of the superior address (to use a mild term) of the Americans ; they tell long stories of damaged flour, stones in provision casks, &c. ; and from the Americans being seen constantly calculating, the story is current that they are born with a pencil behind their ears. I became acquainted with one or two American merchants of great respectability at Havannah, but in general the traders there consist of a *melange* of rogues and vagabonds from all parts of the world, and not a few of them from our own country.

As regards natural history, the Island of Cuba is as yet nearly an untrodden field. It is impossible to go far into the interior, except in large parties, and fully armed. Brigands abound in the sierras and in the lonely valleys ; and as offenders are seldom brought to punishment, the lawless commit their depredations with impunity, so that few have ventured to pursue scientific researches under such circumstances. Much information may be expected on the entomology of the island from the British Commissary Judge, Mr. Macleny, who has made large and valuable collections of the insects. There is little remarkable in the mammalia, or serpents. The botany would be a research of great interest ; and as to the geology, it may be shortly stated that a main ridge of hills run from east to west, principally composed of lime-stone, in many places very cavernous, and the natural grottoes filled with stalactites of great beauty. The highest peak in the island is that of Tarquino, seven thousand seven hundred feet above the level of the sea ; and the most picturesque portion of the island is in the vicinity of St. Iago, on the east coast, where primitive rocks, deeply indented with bays, (the haunts of pirates,) are arranged in the most remarkable and striking forms.

“ It is a wild and breaker-beaten coast,
With cliffs above and a broad sandy shore,
Guarded by shoals and rocks as by an host,
And rarely cease the haughty billows’ roar.”

Whilst I sojourned in Cuba, one of the pleasant-

est walks I had was on the asatea, or terrace roof of my friend's house. The city, glittering with white walls, towers, and pinnacles, was behind me, and before were the fortifications guarding the entrance to the harbour. Taking a to-and-fro walk on that elevated spot, I enjoyed the sea-breeze, and could observe the ladies in the neighbouring houses, sometimes chasing one another or their female slaves through the apartments, or sitting at embroidery, or with a guitar on their knees; or I could watch the various ships which passed in and out under the heavy guns of the Moro. Sometimes a long black slaver, with taunt and raking masts, would steal out; then a fine merchantman, displaying the star-spangled banner; or a broad-bowed Dutchman would roll out to sea. The Cubanos have a fortunate habit of minding their own business, and every one follows his lawful trade without let or hindrance, so ships of all nations and for all purposes go and come; and if a little "manure," as the Persians call a bribe, is placed in the hands of the custom-house officers, no questions are asked.

Seeing the fortifications so often at a distance, inspired me with a longing desire to inspect their interior. I applied for permission to do so, but was refused, and a Spanish officer plainly told me, "The English have twice paid us unfriendly visits here, (in 1669, under Buccaneer Sir Henry Morgan, and again in 1762, under Lord Albemarle,) and really we are suspicious of you. Some of these

days your people may pay us a third visit ; so we don't allow any strangers, except *mauvaises sujets*, to see the inside of our works." But I was resolved to examine the ditches and outworks ; so I got up early one morning, took a boat, crossed over to the other side, walked between the Moro and Cabanas away into the country, looking neither to the right nor left, wheeled round and returned, and walking round the covert way, saw all that I wanted without being challenged.

The Moro at the extreme point of the ridge opposite to Havannah, is washed on two sides by the sea, and on the third is a ditch, apparently one hundred feet deep and eighty broad, cut in the solid rock. The only ditch I ever saw equalling it was that of Dowlutabad, in India. It certainly is as impassable as the Stygian flood to the unburied dead. When the English took the Moro, after a month's siege, some of the batteries were placed on the hill now occupied by the immense forts of the Cabanas, bristling with cannon, and capable of containing thirty thousand men. The Moro and Cabanas, one-eighth of a mile apart, are connected by a covert way, and some say also by a passage under ground. When the English most injudiciously abandoned their splendid conquest in 1764, the Cabanas was commenced, and Mexico principally paid for its construction. It is supposed that it cost fifty millions of dollars, though some maintain that the works were not completed

under one hundred millions. The King of Spain, on seeing the accounts, naturally inquired if the Cabanas were made of silver.

Nothing could rouse the United States to arms sooner than England or France getting possession of Cuba. The valley of the Mississippi would then be commanded, and the commerce of the great emporium, New Orleans, completely under the control of either of these two great nations, which the cabinet of Washington could not brook. The Mexicans, after separation from Old Spain, offered the Cubanos military protection if they would also throw off the yoke of the mother country. This was ridiculous enough, for now-a-days the Mexicans are hardly able to protect themselves; but one great objection to a coalition between Mexico and Cuba is this,—in the former slavery is abolished, certainly prematurely, as far as the tranquillity of the republic is concerned and the happiness of the negroes. Cuba could not consent to this measure. Certainly the Cubanos enjoy many advantages, and do not seem inclined to revolt from Spain at present. They have no direct taxes, except on volantes; their indirect ones are on produce and goods sold in the island, which pay a duty of four and a half per cent. I was surprised at the enormous duty on American flour. A barrel of it is purchased at New Orleans for five dollars; if shipped in a Spanish bottom, it pays seven dollars of duty; if in a foreign vessel, ten; it afterwards sells for fifteen or sixteen; so that the price obtained

for this necessary article covers the duty and freight, and remunerates the importer, though it will be evident from this, that living is not cheap in Havannah.

The Spanish officers evinced great reluctance in allowing me to inspect their barracks, and to see the state of their men. If troops are in an efficient state, their officers ought to be proud to show them to a foreign militaire, and *vice versa*. I attended their evening parades, and certainly should not have had great hesitation in standing before a company of their infantry when firing. Once I saw fifty men attempt a volley, and three muskets went off. But we must not despise the Cubanos, for all that. If they thought there was a prospect of a war, they would get new muskets, I have no doubt. The officers were smart in their dress, wore pointed foils at ordinary parades instead of swords, and the ranks were distinguished as follows:—colonels, lieutenant-colonels, and majors, wore three, two, and one guerdon round the arm; the captains and subalterns wore epaulettes. On one occasion I saw a regiment of recruits pass under the standard, kiss it, and swear to defend it.

I had the honour of making the acquaintance of what is called a Sugar Colonel, that is, the proprietor of a plantation, who has purchased his rank and risen rapidly without having seen any service, and has little inclination to smell powder. The gentleman of whom I now make honourable mention, belonged to one of the battalions which were

ordered on the abortive Mexican expedition some two or three years ago, when Old Spain attempted, with a few hundred men from Cuba, to reconquer New Spain. Our worthy immediately fell sick, was recommended to try the hot baths at Guana-bacoa, and came out with his head all plastered over with mud ; he had slipped his foot and fallen on the floor of the bath-room : of course the expedition failed from his unavoidable absence—

“Thou wear a lion’s hide ! doff it, for shame,
And hang a calf’s skin on those recreant limbs.”

In leaving Havannah to go into the country, it is curious to observe the Spanish taste for ornamental painting ; the shops had birds and beasts depicted on their walls, mounted cabaleros armed with sword and pistol, and donzellas flourishing their fans. At the posadas, or inns by the way-side, a group of monteros would be seen on their long-tailed horses, stout swarthy fellows in straw hats, striped shirts and trowsers, and each with a machette, or long sword, thrust through the handkerchief which girt his loins ; others would meet us with fowls hanging from their saddles by the legs, and call with a singing voice, and the last syllable but one a note or two higher than the rest—

“Vamos a ver esto pollo,
esta gallina caserita,
esto pavo, esto guanago,
Esto gano.”

“Come let us see this chicken, this domestic fowl, this turkey, this guinea-bird, this goose.”

—whilst hundreds of little horses, laden with coffee-bags, or boxes of sugar, followed one another in long rows; on the last a bell, and on the leader the driver sat, cigar in mouth, with sword and dagger by his side. In the day-time, in town, people do carry arms openly, but in the country, day and night, the monteros at his plough, and the solitary shepherd in the broad savannah, all go armed; such is the lawless state of society in Cuba *aujourd'hui*.

For some distance from the city to the westward are extensive vegetable gardens, but no appearance of plantations or of country seats; the former are further in the interior, and though the country, being undulating, and well wooded and watered, is admirably adapted for the latter, yet it would be unsafe for a respectable person to live near Havannah in a lonely place, unless it was furnished with a moat and drawbridge. At the distance of four leagues from Havannah the great Red Plain commences, extending to the south and to the west; on it are seen numerous coffee plantations, tastefully laid out in shady walks, with lime hedges, fruit trees, and avenues of palm, and producing heavy crops of that aromatic berry, grateful to the palate of prince and peasant, from the Tuileries to Tehran.

The cruelties practised on the unfortunate aborigines of the New World by the Spaniards, are recorded in every history of America. It would appear that they shot them down and hunted them with blood-hounds, as if they had been monsters,

whereas, generally speaking, they were mild and inoffensive. Some they enslaved and compelled to wash the sand of rivers for gold dust, to work in the mine, and to till the ground ; all this ended in the total annihilation of the Indians in the Spanish islands, and great mortality among them on the main. Among other appalling facts, the fertile island of Cuba, which once supported an Indian population of four millions, has not a single red hunter in her majestic forests or noble prairies. All are swept away by the ruthless invaders. Now, when I was told that the Spaniards were kind and indulgent to their *negroes*, I doubted the fact, and after minute enquiries into the real state of the case in Cuba, I maintain that, notwithstanding the boasted lenity of the Spaniards to their slaves, *in general* the slaves on estates are treated with great cruelty.

It is true that in Havannah, where wealthy families have large and useless establishments of slaves, they are mildly used ; but there, having nothing to do, and their masters being idle, they are ten times more so—drink, gamble, and are the assassins of the city. By robbing and murdering the whites they retaliate on them for being enslaved, and find the means of pursuing their own vicious courses, and giving full scope to their lawless and depraved appetites.

In Cuba the slave-trade flourishes more than ever, and thousands were landed during the time I was on the island, which was only a few weeks. In 1817 the Spanish Government was induced by

British gold, to the amount of £400,000, to prohibit the African slave-trade. This large sum, which was so liberally given them, was intended to compensate those engaged in the *lawful* trade for the losses they would sustain on being obliged to look for other freight; but the money was actually transferred to Russia for certain ships of war, and the unfortunate slave-dealers got nothing. Of course they thought their case a very hard one, and it appears that their government are of the same opinion, since they now offer no impediment to them in their African traffic.

Slavers still commonly lose one half of their living cargo on the passage from Africa, the poor creatures are so cooped up in the small fast-sailing vessels. When landed, they are marched across the country to the estates for which they are bespoke; their heads are then shaved, and they are shut up in a kind of stable. The proprietors of estates, if they happen to be Spaniards, live during the greater part of the year in Havannah, spending only one or two months in the country. Their overseers are unprincipled Canary-men, who turn out constantly armed with a long sword, or machette, and dagger, and attended by a couple of blood-hounds, their aides-du-camp and protectors. The Canarians say, "We don't carry fire-arms, for they sometimes miss fire, but the stroke of the long machette is certain; however, the negroes are more afraid of our blood-hounds than all our arms put together, for they will immediately tear to pieces those who offer to touch us."

Two hours before sunrise the negroes are summoned to their toil, and while the dew still lies heavy on the ground, or the rainy season may have rendered the ground a morass, they cut grass for the horses and cattle, and feed the stock under negro drivers for gangs of twenty-five. After this, they proceed to the sugar or coffee plots; there they labour with the hoe till breakfast-time, for which they are allowed half an hour; again at work till dinner, for which an hour is allowed, if it be not crop time, when a quarter of an hour is all they have to devour their meals in. Sun-down does not terminate their labours, for on moonlight nights they carry wood or stones, building materials, or are otherwise employed till nine at night, when a bell rings them to their stable. I do not say that the Cuba plantation slaves are all treated as above-described; but a great many are so abused, and this I had from the mouths of Spanish planters.

The Spanish and French planters of Cuba give their negroes rice, maize, and four ounces of jerked (dried) beef at each meal, but barely enough to support nature. The Americans in Cuba give salt fish instead of beef, because it is cheaper; but their negroes are not so strong as those fed upon beef. The field negroes go nearly naked. The negresses commonly get a coffee-bag to cover themselves: they cut a hole in the bottom of it for their head, and two holes at the corners for the arms. Sunday brings no holiday to these unfortunates, for till ten in the forenoon, and from four till dusk, they labour as usual in the field; between ten and four they are

humanely permitted to cultivate their own vegetable grounds. Individuals of both sexes are cruelly flogged with a cow-skin of plaited strips of leather; and to sum up, the negroes on the estates in Cuba too often are badly clothed, badly fed, badly lodged, severely punished, over-worked, and die at the rate of ten per cent. per annum — notwithstanding the humane and excellent fiscal regulations for negroes promulgated by the Spanish government: but we all know, that it is one thing to make laws, and another to administer and enforce them.

No doubt, many individuals may be found in Cuba who treat their slaves well; and I again repeat, that what I have said above relates only to the treatment of slaves on a great many estates, not on all. Some slaves get so much the upper-hand of their masters and mistresses in the Havannah, that though they are clothed, fed, and lodged by them, they sometimes will not sweep the rooms, or bring up the dinner, unless they get paid for it; and there is a foolish old Spaniard in the country who won't allow any women on his estate, as he says it would give rise to immoral behaviour on the part of his negroes. I need not particularise the consequence, but merely state, that his slaves run all over the country.

Now and then British schooners capture slavers, and in very gallant style, but as perhaps a dozen planters and merchants are concerned in one vessel, the loss does not affect them much. New lands are continually brought into cultivation, and though there is a great demand for negroes, yet the supply

is ample and the price moderate. Before the trade was (nominally) prohibited, the price of a field-negro was five hundred dollars; now, though it is said to be unlawful to traffic in slaves, the price is two hundred or two hundred and fifty dollars—this speaks volumes.

As far as I could learn, there are more slaves imported from Africa at this moment into settlements not British, than ever there were before. That valuable public servant and most intelligent gentleman, his Britannic Majesty's Commissary Judge at the Havannah, suggests that the only effectual way to put a stop to slave-dealing is, "to search and condemn vessels that are fitting out for slave cargoes, and not to wait until they have actually got slaves on board before they can be captured." As I said before, I saw several slavers sail out of the harbour of the Havannah with perfect impunity, freighted with British manufactures to barter for slaves on the coast of Africa. British and American runaway sailors are tempted with fifty dollars a month to serve in slavers; they stand to their guns, whilst Spaniards and others run up the rigging when they are attacked.

Of an evening I have often stopped to listen to the simple music of the Ethiopians, sitting at the arched gateway of the Casas of the Hidalgos, with the moon revealing the gardens in the court behind them, breathing of perfumes and displaying the Moorish style of architecture to great advantage under its mild rays. The instrument in which these sable children of Africa most delighted is

called the bamba; it is a bent bow, about the thickness of a finger, with a strand or split cane extended across it; one end of the string is applied to the teeth, where also it is beaten with a slender stick. The other end of the bow is held in the left hand, which also presses against the string a clasp-knife, and occasionally withdraws it. The tones produced by this enlarged variety of Jew's-harp are few, but inexpressibly sweet and wild. To the bamba the negroes dance, with the accompaniment of the drum, and sing while playing on the dulcimer, or shallow box with unequal reeds fixed across the lid of it by cords elevated on bridges,

“Deem our nation brutes no longer,
Till some reason ye shall find
Worthier of regard and stronger
Than the colour of our kind.
Slaves of gold, whose sordid dealings
Tarnish all your boasted powers,
Prove that ye have human feelings
Ere you proudly question ours.”

The lower class of whites, or monteros, who inhabit the country, are hospitable and obliging, though not very strict in morals; for in some remote parts the abominable crime of incest prevails. This evil may proceed from the detestable influence of slavery; and from the country being so thinly peopled that religious instruction is difficult to be procured,—and still more, it is to be feared, from the influx of foreigners (as I said before) having tended to make them despise the little religion they possess. The higher ranks are disposed to be very friendly to strangers; and many of them, par-

ticularly such as do not gamble, are as well informed people as any in an equivalent circle in Europe. In the domestic virtues they are infinitely better than they have been described to be, and certainly far superior to their neighbours of New Orleans. It is the opinion of an old and very intelligent foreign resident in Cuba, that, making allowance for the difference of manners, the wives and daughters are as correct there as in any equal population in Europe, although, certainly, some glaring instances to the contrary may be produced; and unfortunately female society is not accustomed there to erect itself into a tribunal to decide on the characters of its members. The principal vices of the whole of the inhabitants, both high and low, I repeat it, are gambling, and its accompanying idleness and extravagance. The Captain-general, Vives, sets a strange example to those under him. He gained a name on the Peninsula, but now spends most of his time in his private cock-pit; and though his allowances are very handsome, he is so penurious, that he gives no entertainments whatever; and when he wants to take a drive, he borrows a volante from a friend, for he is not possessed of a single horse or vehicle.

Through the kind attention of Mr. Macleay, I had an opportunity of seeing the best society of the island. He not only gave a ball at his own casa, where I saw the fashionables of Guanabacoa, but also took me to the houses of the Spanish nobility in the town and country. I dined one day with the Count Fernandino (the Duke of Devonshire of

Havannah). His palace is a most magnificent one : lofty apartments, most tastefully furnished — black and gold were the predominant colours ; in them were immense mirrors and superb chandeliers ; the floors were in alternate tablets of black and white marble, and there was the *aureum lacunar* (the gilded ceiling) in every hall. No carpets were used, but on this account, and the darkened windows, the rooms were delightfully cool, though it was the hottest season of the year.

It is the etiquette in Havannah to arrive at the house of entertainment an hour or two before dinner, to show that the conversation of the company is preferred to the mere viands ; accordingly, we were welcomed by the Conde and Condesa two hours before the meal was announced, and received the Spanish compliment of — “ *La casa es a la disposicion de usted,*” — the house is entirely at your disposal.

The Count spends a great deal of his time in his extensive library, and is a most intelligent and excellent nobleman, possessed of more influence in Cuba than any other individual. He is a spare-made, middle-aged man, with dark hair and aquiline nose. The Countess is very handsome, amiable, and accomplished.

The entertainment at which I had the honour of being present in the palace of this noble pair, was served in a saloon open at one side ; and looking from it into the court below, the horses and carriages were seen. I remarked game chickens running about under the table, and many old and

favourite negresses gazed at us from side rooms. The viands were, bread soup, larded mutton, partridges, fish, with abundance of oil and haricot beans ; olivos, honey and cheese, and dolces, or preserves, so sweet that the flavour of the fruit was not perceived ; but between the tropics it is difficult to preserve fruit, unless a superabundance of sugar is employed. After many courses of savoury food, but far too rich for my taste, though corrected with bumpers of excellent French claret, the company adjourned to a music-room, where one of the señoritas sang and played on the guitar and organ. Portfolios of engravings were examined ; and finally the eyelids betokened that it was time to retire for the siesta, previous to the drive on the Pasao, or to the walk on the Alemada, or public promenade, on the wall overlooking the man-of-war harbour.

A song of the Havannah begins thus :—

“ Muchacha, se te casar es,
Casa te con un Catalon,
Que, si no tiene dinero,
Se meterá a Mussulman.”

Girl ! if you marry,
Marry a Catalonian,
Who, if he has no money,
Will become a pirate (*to procure it for you*).

It was really difficult to get away from the Havannah, for if one is well introduced, there are so many attractive donnas trying to persuade one to linger, that it is no easy matter to summon up resolution to take out the passport. The ladies

of the family of the Marquis de Ramos were kind enough to present me with a specimen of the greatest curiosity of the island—the daquilla, or lace-tree. If the outer bark of a branch of this remarkable plant is bruised with a mallet, and a knife run down it, the laminæ of vegetable lace are disclosed, which, when carefully opened out, afford lace nearly as fine and strong as Brussels, and from six to twelve inches in width.

I took a passage in a small Spanish schooner to proceed to New Orleans, but she sailed before her time, and although I followed her in a boat out to sea, yet she would not lie-to to pick me up. But what was an inconvenience at the time, turned out eventually a merciful intervention of Providence in my behalf; the schooner was wrecked off the Louisiana coast. I returned from the fruitless chase, and spent the evening with a countryman, Mr. John Norman, to whom I am under many obligations for supplying me with statistical and commercial information.

It was high time for me to leave Havannah, for I saw the priests going about in their volantes to administer extreme unction to yellow-fever patients, with a little boy ringing a bell before them, and another bearing a lantern. Yet since I had made up my mind to risk New Orleans at the most unhealthy season, I had no very pleasant prospect before me. Still I did not give way to alarm, having fortunately some sources from whence to derive comfort and confidence. I next took a passage in the Aurora Spanish brigantine, placed my baggage

on board, and was to sail on the following morning. I supped for the last time with Mr. Jackson and his excellent lady; and regretting extremely the necessity I was under to part, perhaps for ever, with such valued friends, from whom, if I had been a brother, I could not have received kinder treatment, I retired with a sorrowful heart to my chamber. In turning out, after the manner of an ancient mariner, to see how the sky looked, there was a certain wildness in the heavens which was not particularly agreeable to behold — the clouds collected in masses, then suddenly dispersed, and the moon had a greenish aspect. I lay down: presently the wind began to whistle through the shutters; then it came in gusts; then it howled round the dwelling, as if evil spirits were in the blast. It increased in force till it became a perfect roar; doors and shutters were blown in, and tiles fell from the roofs; the rain lashed the trembling walls in ceaseless torrents. Cries of distress were heard in the streets; then the firing of guns from the mouth of the harbour. A large American brig was on shore on the rocks of the Punta; some of her hands were washed into the sea, which swept over her decks, and even over the ramparts of the Punta: the foremast went by the board, but fortunately fell towards the shore, and on it the survivors escaped. It blew a regular hurricane, and two schooners sunk at their anchors immediately before the house. The night was, at times, pitchy dark, and then again the lightning gleamed fearfully across the heavens in one broad sheet, revealing

the buildings, and the shipping in the outer and exposed harbour fearfully tossed about by the angry billows.

The vessel in which I had embarked my baggage was to sail at six, and at five the wind had somewhat abated; accordingly I slipped on my sea-going jacket and trowsers, and set off at a run towards the quay, and dashed on as fast as I could; but the streets were knee deep in running water, the rain poured on my devoted head in torrents, tiles fell from the houses round me, and in turning a corner, a water-spout from a broad roof nearly knocked me off my legs, and drenched me from head to foot. I reached the quay, and took refuge in the cabin of the *Aurora*, pretty much in the same state as Brunel junior, when he escaped from the Thames Tunnel. I asked the Captain if he would sail that day: “*Demonio!*” said he, “no, no, Señor. With this *viento fresco* (gale of wind) we must wait till to-morrow; in the mean time I’ll go ashore, and spend the day with a *corazon chico* (little heart) of my acquaintance, and I recommend your doing the same.” — “*Hombre!* (man alive!) why not sail to-day? If it become *buen tiempo*, and the wind lulls, your cargo of fruit will spoil if you stay here.” — “No importa,” said he, “I don’t care. *Adios, Señor, servidor de usted,*” and jumped on the quay.

The above hurricane was the same which desolated Barbadoes, and swept from south-east to north-west across Cuba, and reached New Orleans. In Cuba, it caused considerable destruction to life and property. During the day it blew a fresh

breeze, and I went down to the Punta to examine the wreck of the American, and view the mighty billows rolling towards the opposite Moro, and dashing up their white foam to the lighthouse tower. A group of negroes stood beside me, when suddenly they raised a shout of joy ; another schooner broke from her moorings by the force of the wind, and drifted down among the shipping : the crew slipped overboard, and saving themselves in their boats, the schooner was left to her fate. She was fast leaving the harbour, and the negroes shouted with delight,—for in them the organ of destructiveness is very large. One, who spoke English, cried — “ She go for bring coal,” meaning a negro cargo, when she struck the rocks under the Apostles’ Battery, and was quickly broken up, to the great amusement of the black group.

We did not cast off from the quay till late on the following day, for the Spaniards had no idea of venturing to sea till they ascertained, by the appearance of the weather and the prognostications of their almanack, that the gale was entirely over.

We spread our canvass, and with a southerly breeze rolled out into the open and still-troubled sea, and at sun-down the Moro was a speck in the horizon.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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